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TRY-SQUARE,

OR THE

CHURCH OF PRACTICAL RELIGION.

By REPORTER.

"They're drivin' o' their spiles down now," says she,
"To the hard grennit o' God's fust idee."
—Lowell.

NEW YORK:
THE TRUTH-SEEKER COMPANY,
28 Lafayette Place.

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PREFACE.

In preparing this volume for the press my work has been for the most part merely editorial. While, perhaps, in one sense, I might be truthfully called the author, yet I am not entitled to that distinction, and disclaim it.

Having been a court stenographer, and prematurely worn-out in the service, I had settled in Pinville to while away the remainder of my days only a short time before the events chronicled in these pages. In Pinville, and in the rural districts for miles around, "Uncle Job's new church" had been the "town talk" for weeks, and I resolved to attend the first meeting to see for myself what it all meant. Being at the meeting, and having pencil and paper, I took notes from mere force of habit; and, becoming interested, I continued to take notes of subsequent meetings until I had accumulated a vast mass of them. They had been carelessly thrown, from time to time, into an old box of odds and ends, where they remained until the idea struck me to give the

cream of them to the world, in the belief that thousands outside of Pinville would be both interested and benefited thereby.

So far as was consistent with my culling and pruning, I have left "Uncle Job's" plain blunt English just as it was delivered by him in his colloquial talks to his neighbors. Literary style was the farthest thing from his thoughts; and, therefore, technical critics will have ample opportunity to find fault; yet I have found, in many instances, that any effort of mine to polish his sentences only detracted from their strength.

Very much matter, which seemed excellent when delivered, has been pruned away in the belief that the general public would not be particularly interested therein. But there will, doubtless, be critics to condemn me for not trimming away a great deal more. To such I can only plead that tastes and judgments differ, and that I have exercised *my* poor taste and judgment to the very best of their ability. I am aware that another editor could, and probably would, have made a very different book out of my material, but whether his book would have been better than mine is not for me to decide.

For obvious reasons I have substituted fictitious names for the real ones; and modesty compels me also to withhold my own name.

To my mind the chief characteristic of Job

Sawyer's work, and that which pre-eminently distinguishes it from that of all other rejectors of orthodoxy, is that it is essentially *affirmative* and *constructive*, while theirs has been largely or wholly *negative* and *destructive*.

As Mr. Sawyer frequently employs the word *God* in a sense differing so widely from ordinary usage as to possibly mislead the casual reader, I am led to call attention right here to his own definition and explanation on pages 43, 119, etc. REPORTER.

PINVILLE, Feb., 1887.

TRY-SQUARE; OR, THE CHURCH OF PRACTICAL RELIGION.

CHAPTER I.

THE PARSON AND SAWYER'S DIFFERENCES.

In the fall of the year 18—, the Conference of the M. E. Church appointed Parson Brownwell to the charge at Pinville. He was a hearty, jovial, frank, free-and-easy, thoroughly good man—such a man as everybody likes at first sight, and continues to like. One morning after he had been in Pinville only a few weeks, he happened in at the place of business of one of his parishioners where Job Sawyer also chanced to be, and the following colloquy took place between them:

Parson (*extending his hand*). Good-morning, Mr. Sawyer.

Sawyer (*shaking the proffered hand*). Good-morning, Brother Brownwell.

Parson (*smiling*). Why do you call me brother?

Sawyer (*also smiling*). Because I assume that you are, as you ought to be, a co-laborer of mine in the great work of trying to make the world better.

Parson. But they say you don't go to church. How can anybody who don't go to church be a co-worker with me?

Sawyer. There are more ways than one to work in the same field. One plows, another sows, and yet

others reap and garner the crop. But I *do* go to church whenever I think I can learn anything new or beneficial by doing so. I have been twice to hear you—once in the morning and once in the evening. I always give every new minister a fair trial.

PARSON (*smiling graciously*). Well, what did you think of my preaching?

SAWYER. I liked your style very well, but you told the same old stories that I had heard ever since I was a boy, only you told them in *your* way. I don't wish to be understood as finding any fault in particular with the old stories; but it has been a good many years since I have found either profit or interest in them, and as I can spend my time more pleasantly and profitably at home, I usually stay there.

PARSON. But those old stories, as you call them, are none the less true because they are old. You don't dispute their truth, do you?

SAWYER. I just said I didn't want to find fault with anything. Grant, if you please, that they are true; they are no truer than the multiplication table, and no one would care to hear that repeated and sung and harped on forever. There is such a thing as having too much of a good thing. I think I have graduated in that school.

PARSON. What would you suggest for a change?

SAWYER. I don't know as it is within my province to make suggestions. I will say, however, that the universe of God is wide and high and deep and old, and many things have been revealed to man that are neither mentioned in the Bible nor preached from

the pulpit. All *truth* is *God's truth* and is sacred, whether found in the Bible or out of it. All *untruth* is not of God and is not sacred, even though it should be found in the Bible. The great want of this age is preachers with the wisdom and the courage to separate the untrue from the true, and to teach to the multitude the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Men, women, and children are, and have been for ages, sinning and suffering through ignorance, and the church affords them no relief. It was prophesied that the time would come when the people should beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; but in my opinion that time will never come until our churches shall be converted into school-houses, and the people instructed and educated therein in *all* the principles (physical as well as spiritual) that are involved in living a correct life in this world.

PARSON. I am glad to hear you talk as you do. I have revised my opinion of you already. I have heard you spoken of as an Atheist; but I know that such talk as yours comes from a pure and honest heart. You have just the right material in you to make a good Christian.

SAWYER. I am pained to be compelled to say that some of your Christian brethren deem it no sin to lie about me, simply because I am unable to agree with them in all their notions. I claim to be a religious man, and I think I have been such, in fact, for more than thirty years, but I have some notions that have not been borrowed from Luther or Calvin or Wesley or the Pope of Rome, and therefore I am not in good

odor with bigoted simpletons who never conceived an original thought.

PARSON. Now, Mr. Sawyer, you claim to be a co-worker with me, and yet you admit that you stay at home taking your ease while I am laboring with my flock. If you don't like what we are doing in the churches, why don't you take hold and show us how to do something better? For one, I shall be glad to have you do so, and I will promise to look on your work without prejudice, and I will adopt in my own practice anything that seems to me to be an improvement.

SAWYER (*dropping his head thoughtfully*). I think that point is "well taken," as the lawyers say. I have heard it before, and I always thought it was a good point. I have been hoping and wishing for years that *somebody* would make a move in the right direction; but nobody moves, though millions are complaining that something is wrong. Since you have brought the matter home to me so forcibly, I think I will undertake, in my humble and uncouth way, to start a reformation right here in Pinville.

PARSON. Good! I will do all I can to help you in every good work.

SAWYER. Thank you. I will commence to-day, and will see you again. Good-morning.

PARSON. Good-morning.

CHAPTER II.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF SAWYER.

REPORTER. As Job Sawyer (called "Uncle Job" by almost everybody) is the *hero* of this book, a brief description of him seems necessary, and it may as well be put in here as anywhere else.

At the time mentioned in the previous chapter, he was about sixty years of age, in the most perfect health—height about five feet ten inches, weight about one hundred and seventy pounds—having a full head of iron-gray hair and full snow-white beard. In his youth and early manhood he had led a roving life, and had known much

> "Of moving accidents by flood and field;
> Of hairbreadth 'scapes-i' the imminent, deadly breach."

He had once been shipwrecked in the Arctic seas, while on a whaling voyage; had been chosen by lot to be butchered for food for his companions, but a new ballot was ordered, by every voice except his own, because the doomed one had shown inventive powers which the party deemed indispensable to their salvation. Among other performances of his, on that voyage, it is related that before the wrecking he had successfully amputated a sailor's arm, the

ship's surgeon being dead. After the ship had gone down, and the whole party was in the boats without compass or food, he constructed a tolerable compass by unjointing the blade of his jackknife (which happened to have been previously magnetized), and suspending it by a thread tied round its center of gravity.

At another time he had been lost for two weeks in a "howling wilderness." It was in winter, a deep snow was on the ground, and he was alone, without food or shelter, and with no tool or weapon, excepting the ever-present jackknife. He made fires by striking sparks with the back of the closed knife-blade, from a flinty stone, into *lint* scraped from the linen lining of his clothing. He killed small game with a bow and arrows made by him with the same jackknife, the bow being a dry hemlock limb, and the string a portion of the linen lining of his trousers. The worst part of his difficulty was that he was incumbered with a five-year-old child, but he saved the child as well as himself.

On another occasion, he escaped unhurt from a burning hotel, in which many lives were lost. His room was in the fifth story, and before the alarm was given, the only place of egress (a winding staircase) was closed by the fire. He instantly began taking the cord out of his bedstead (that being before slats and spring mattresses were much used). He anchored one end of the cord, and threw the other out of the window; but no sooner had he done so than it was seized by five persons all at once, who were standing paralyzed with fear in windows below his. The cord, being subjected to so great a strain, was

instantly cut off by the sharp corner of his window-sill, and the five persons were dashed to the ground in a heap—three being killed, and two made cripples for life. Young Sawyer was now at his wits' end, but he lost no time in useless lamentation. Indeed, there was no time to be lost, for the flames were spreading rapidly, and smoke was pouring from nearly every window in the building. He fell to work tearing the sheets and bedticks into strips, and tying them together, end to end. In an incredibly short time he had constructed a rope of considerable length, and tying one end to the stub of bed-cord, which was already anchored, he swung himself over the sill and slid rapidly down to the end of his rope (which was about fifteen feet from the ground), whence he descended by a short ladder which persons on the ground had brought to his assistance. One minute later the flames from the windows would have burned his rope in two before he could have used it.

All of these tales, and many others, are told by the village gossips with infinite detail. It would, no doubt, interest the reader to have more of the details of these incidents, but such matter is outside of my present design. I only give sufficient to show the kind of stuff "Uncle Job" Sawyer is made of.

By a lucky purchase of land in an early day, he had become "rich," as his neighbors say, and he spent a good deal of his time in reading and study. For many years prior to my acquaintance with him, he had been a justice of the peace, but this was much against his own inclination. He would never allow a suit to be tried out before him if he could help it,

but would give the parties a good "talking to," and they would generally settle their disputes in some way, and part on good terms, much to the disgust of the lawyers.

He had a great natural fondness for machinery and the mechanical arts, and when examining any machine would frequently suggest an improvement. His neighbors say that very many of his suggestions, made in this way, have been the foundation for new patents, though never in his name, and it was seldom that the patentee would *acknowledge* proper credit.

Wherever he was known, he was famous as a strictly upright, honest, and conscientious man. He had some ideas on religious subjects which were peculiarly his own (as will in a measure appear in the following chapters), but he never obtruded these views upon others; though, whenever it became necessary for him to speak his mind, in any place, he always did so in such a way as to leave no doubt as to his exact position concerning the subject under consideration. Many excellent Christians who know him well, as well ministers as laymen, have great respect for his religious convictions; but some of the narrow-minded sort call him an Infidel, or a Freethinker, or an Atheist, according to the whim which happens to possess them at the time, and these epithets are usually accompanied by adjectives more or less emphatic or profane.

Even those who reviled him readily admitted his uncommon ability and genius; and right here may be mentioned one of Uncle Job's characteristics: he was excessively modest, and seemed not to realize that he possessed any extraordinary power. He

made no effort to be *smart;* but he was constantly expressing the grandest thoughts in the simplest manner and style. Like all great men, he did great things with the same ease that a small man would do a small thing.

As I look back and read over the above sketch of Job Sawyer, I feel that it is grossly inadequate, and even contemptible; but I have crowded all I could into the space that I had set apart for that purpose, and the disappointed reader will have to look further into the book and see the picture which the old gentleman has drawn of himself.

CHAPTER III.

A CONSPIRACY UNEARTHED.

EARLY in the afternoon of the day on which the dialogue related in the first chapter occurred, Uncle Job commenced to circulate and solicit signatures to a paper, of which the following is a copy :

"We hereby organize ourselves into a society to be called 'The Church of Practical Religion,' for the purpose of worshiping the True God, and teaching His Sacred Word to all the people; and with the design of being finally incorporated as a religious society under the general laws of the State."

Uncle Job was very careful not to ask any person to sign his paper who had any blemish whatever upon his character or reputation. He asked several who were members of Christian churches, but all declined, though two or three of them said they wished the new project success.

Every person to whom the paper was presented had to be fully informed, not only of the general object of the movement, but the colloquy with the Parson, related in the first chapter, had to be told over again and again, with a great deal more not necessary to repeat here; and the result was that

nearly a week of pretty diligent work elapsed before Uncle Job had entirely "done the town." At last, however, he found that he had the names of eighteen men besides himself, and seven women, all of whom were persons of solid worth and excellent standing in the village of Pinville and its vicinity.

It happened that one of the signers of the paper was the owner of the public hall of the village, and he tendered the use of it to the New Church free of charge.

Uncle Job next gave out notice that the first regular service of the New Society would take place in Benson's Hall on Sunday next, at 10 o'clock A.M., to which the public were cordially invited.

In the evening preceding the Sunday which was to be the opening day for the New Church, Uncle Job was visited at his house by Mrs. Evener, a near neighbor, who was a member of the Methodist church, but nevertheless a firm believer in Uncle Job's sincerity and honesty of purpose. She had her work-apron thrown loosely over her head, and was greatly excited and out of breath. After a few hasty words of salutation and explanation, she delivered herself in substance as follows:

MRS. EVENER. Mr. Sawyer, I have been praying night and day for three days for God to show me my duty in regard to a matter which deeply concerns you, and I have at last found it to be my duty to expose a plot concocted by Mr. Badsinner to disturb your meeting to-morrow. I mistrusted something was up by the way Mr. Evener acted, and by what he said (or rather by what he seemed to be trying to conceal), and so I kept at him until he told me all

about it. He don't think it is right, but he don't dare say anything for fear of making Badsinner mad. The plan is to employ all the whisky-bloats, jail-birds, dead-beats, and other godless persons in the town to go to your meeting and applaud and cheer and carry on, so as to provoke a riot if possible, and then to call upon the authorities to suppress the meetings because they are disorderly.

SAWYER. Do you know the names of any of the villains he has hired to do this dirty work?

MRS. E. Yes, I have made a memorandum of them from time to time, as Mr. Evener told them over to me, until I have got eleven. They are on a piece of paper in my pocket.

REP. Here Mrs. Evener pulled a lot of "truck" from her dress pocket, put it in her lap, and after pulling it over, handed Uncle Job a strip torn from the margin of a newspaper with the names penciled thereon. As she gave the paper to Uncle Job, she exclaimed with great fervency:

MRS. E. Oh, Mr. Sawyer, you don't know how I have struggled with myself, and wrestled with God, to know what my duty was in this matter! At last it seemed as clear as daylight that I must come and tell you all, and I have done so; but you must not for the world let it be known where you got your information, for Mr. Badsinner is an awful bad man, if he *does* belong to our church, and I don't know what he might take it into his head to do, in revenge, if he should find out that I told this thing against him. He is a powerful man in our church, for he is very rich and pays liberally; but they say he stole his

money from a railroad company before he settled in Pinville.

SAWYER. I have long regarded him as a very bad and dangerous man, and I can't see why he should be retained in the communion of any church which pretends to serve God.

MRS. E. They didn't know him when they took him into the church, and now since they *do* know him, they are afraid of him. He is a terror to us all.

REP. Here Uncle Job shook Mrs. Evener warmly by the hand, as she rose to leave, thanked her most cordially for the information she had given him, and said:

SAWYER. I believe you have done a good and noble deed, and that God will reward you for it; but I shall consider it my duty to reward you, whether God does or not.

MRS. E. (*with emotion*). Oh, I am already rewarded by the lifting of the mountain from my shoulders.

REP. At the end of this hurried interview, Mrs. Evener withdrew, and Uncle Job put on his hat, with a sort of emphasis, saying, as he did so, in a low, firm voice, "Forewarned is forearmed," and went out into the darkness and remained until midnight.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONSPIRACY CRUSHED.

REP. Benson's Hall was completely filled some little time before 10 o'clock on the Sunday morning appointed for the opening services of the New Church. Precisely at 10 o'clock, Uncle Job appeared upon the stage and walked with measured step to the little stand that had been placed for him near the front and center of the platform. Before he had reached his place, several wild and blood-curdling yells rose from various parts of the hall, and loud pounding was heard, as though by mallets on the floor. At least one egg (some say more than one) was thrown, which struck a chair on the stage and exploded in rear of its intended victim. As Uncle Job stood there at that moment, waiting for silence, entirely calm and serene, his long, gray hair combed back from his forehead and lodged behind his ears, he seemed a perfect specimen of noble manhood. When quiet was restored, which was within thirty seconds, Mr. Sawyer spoke very deliberately, substantially as follows:

SAWYER. As a preface to the exercises this morning, I shall say something for the express benefit of those fellows who have given me this barbaric salutation;

and if Mr. Badsinner, your employer, who stands near the entry door to see if you earn your dirty pay, will stand where he is for a few minutes, he, also, will hear something greatly to his advantage. I am fully informed of your devilish designs, and I know the names of the hirelings who are expected to carry them out; and I may as well add that I am fully prepared to give you battle. In the first place, let me tell you that you are engaged in a criminal business, and you would now be in the custody of the police but for my forbearance to give the order for your arrest. You will remember that I am a magistrate, and have ample power to preserve the peace when a disturbance occurs in my presence. If each of the persons who contributed to the violent outburst a minute ago will look about him, he will find two duly authorized peace officers within six feet of him; and Mr. Badsinner himself is duly honored with a similar body-guard. I am quite inclined to believe, however, that I might have spared myself the trouble of getting all these officers to come here; for I cannot help thinking that this outrageous demonstration, like an overdose of poison, has been its own antidote. Every decent person in the house, whether in sympathy with our movement or not, must have been completely disgusted at the performance. You overshot the mark, boys, and made a failure.

Now, my brethren, I turn my thoughts and remarks to you; but I have been so disturbed during the night and this morning with this conspiracy to break up our meetings, that I don't feel at all in the mood of preaching a sermon. I think, therefore, I

shall have to give you, in a very informal way, the history of this movement down to the present time, and something of my designs and hopes for the future.

REP. Uncle Job then related, with some detail, what the reader already knows, and continued in substance as follows :

SAWYER. I found it a very delicate job to circulate the initiatory paper without giving offense to some really well-meaning people, but yet who had such grave faults as, in my opinion, to render it improper to receive them into our society as charter members. My effort was to get the name of no person against whom the least suspicion of impropriety had ever been whispered. I wanted the fountain of our undertaking to be as pure as possible. I had the greatest struggle with myself over my good friend Gustavus Nash, who you all know is a strong man, and as square as a brick. He has once had a profound religious experience, but it has become somewhat soured by his keen perception of the hollowness and hypocrisy of latter-day religious profession. I had to shut him out because of his daily and hourly use of vulgar, profane, and obscene language. Another person, who has many good points, was rejected for the reason that common rumor charged him with too great familiarity with certain disreputable females. Two or three others had to be skipped because it is generally understood that they resort to crooked methods to escape their just share of the public taxes.

I think a careful scrutiny of that list will reveal the name of no "dead beat"—no person who changes

his residence every three months, more or less, to avoid the payment of a just rent—no person who obtains credit, at the grocery or elsewhere, by promising to pay next week, and then forgets to redeem his promise—no manufacturer of or dealer in intoxicating beverages, nor any person who knowingly permits his property to be used in connection with such business—no gambler, nor person who permits his property to be used for the purposes of gambling—no woman of unchaste character, nor any male associate of such a woman—no intriguing, deceitful politician, nor trickster of any kind—no person who buys votes, or corruptly influences votes in any election—no person who sells his vote or political influence for money or other valuable thing—no person who has wilfully sworn falsely, either in taking an oath of office, or otherwise—in short, you cannot find on that list the name of any person who has ever been accused of any act, however trivial, which the common voice of mankind pronounces wrong.

But while I have been thus careful as to the charter membership, yet it is my wish and hope that every human being, without regard to past life or condition, may, by giving proper pledges for future conduct, be admitted into a probationary membership, which, by continued good behavior, will eventually ripen into fuller fellowship and communion with the main body of the Society. It should be our first and greatest aim and effort to assist our erring brothers and sisters. We who have, or think we have, gained a foothold on higher and firmer ground, should reach down to them helping hands.

Now, a few words as to my purpose in beginning

this movement. I have long noticed that in every large city there are tens of thousands, in every medium-sized city thousands, in every considerable village hundreds, and in every rural township scores of the very best of citizens, of both sexes, who take no interest whatever in the fashionable church societies, church-going, and church services of the present day; and I have observed with great sorrow that very many of these good people, because they do not enjoy ordinary church-going, nor feel any duty incumbent upon them to attend what is called divine service, have withdrawn and secluded themselves, to a great extent, from the society of their fellow-men (some of them almost becoming hermits, except in so far as business or trade compels them to mingle with the world), thus wasting the mighty influence that they might and *ought* to exert for good in the world. A little inquiry generally shows that nearly all of these people have strong religious feeling, and have thought much and deeply on the subject; but they are all independent thinkers, and usually have the honesty and boldness to express any skepticism they may entertain in relation to the creeds and dogmas and sacred words which the preachers tell us we must believe or be forever damned. For these reasons, these people are frequently stigmatized as *Infidels*. My friends, whenever you hear any person derisively spoken of as an Infidel, make haste to seek him out, for, in nine cases out of ten, you will find a person of moral worth, and in the majority of cases you will find the genuine stuff of which martyrs have been made in all the ages. It requires strength of character, honesty, and courage to enable a per-

son to voluntarily submit to the reproaches and persecutions of all Christendom; while the weak, knavish, and cowardly swell the ranks of the hypocrites. Do you know, my brethren, that Jesus Christ was denounced, persecuted, and crucified as an *Infidel?* It's a fact. Martin Luther, the great leader and mainspring of the Reformation, was the greatest Infidel of the age in which he lived (that is, he was called so, and persecuted as such, by his opponents). All the martyred victims of religious zeal and persecution through all recorded time have been condemned and punished as *Infidels.* Galileo said, "The world moves," and he was instantly declared an *Infidel;* and all other world-movers before and since have shared the same fate. Our present state of civilization could never have been brought about—but the world would have stood stationary for thousands of years—had it not been for the glorious galaxy of *Infidels,* so-called, who have bravely laid down their lives in the grand struggle of the centuries for liberty of conscience, liberty of thought, and liberty of speech. Yes, the world *has* moved, indeed; and the so-called *Infidels* have moved it. I say, God bless them. I can myself see that within the last twenty-five years orthodoxy has been wonderfully modified in some respects, under the constant hammering of the Infidels. And yet our Christian friends tell us that we owe all the wonderful inventions, discoveries, mental culture, and enlightenment of our time to the Christian religion. I deny it, and boldly assert the direct contrary. Orthodoxy has blocked the wheels of progress everywhere and in all ages, until battered and shattered to pieces by the batter-

ing-rams of Infidelity. Again I say, God bless the Infidels.

Perhaps I ought to explain that the word *Infidel*, as used by orthodoxy, is a misnomer, for it means *unfaithful*. The stars are not more faithful to their courses through the heavens than the so-called Infidel is faithful to the principles that he believes to be right and true.

I have not the remotest thought of making war against anything but evil. Every person who is making an honest endeavor to do good in the world, I call my brother. I may differ with him as to his beliefs or his methods, or both; but so long as I have confidence in his sincerity, still I shall call him brother.

Nor do I intend to found a new religious sect—God forbid. On the contrary, I want to lay down a platform that is broad enough for the whole religious world to stand on—so broad that when the sects shall lay aside sectarianism (as they some day will), they will then be at one with us.

I do not want to pull down a single church edifice, nor throw a single preacher out of business—there is need enough for all—but I shall rejoice to see them so managed and employed as to do more good to mankind than they seem to be now doing. My aim and desire simply are to organize and marshal the vast host of so-called Infidels—now "wasting their sweetness on the desert air"—into a powerful and well-equipped army, in the hope and faith that it will do valiant service in the cause of sacred and ETERNAL TRUTH. This may seem a small beginning for so great an undertaking, but it is just as large as

any beginning ever was. The largest tree that ever grew on the face of the earth started from a little germ at the little end of a little seed.*

I hope we shall not meet with any serious opposition from the ranks of sectarianism; for, with so much evil in the world, it would be too bad to have the avowed opponents of evil wrangling and fighting among themselves.

My aim at present is to institute a sort of school where the multitude can receive instruction from week to week, and from year to year, in all the departments of knowledge necessary to enable them to live correct and happy lives in this world.

I should, perhaps, add right here—though I can barely touch the point just now—that I do not mean to invade, on the one hand, the domain now occupied by our educational institutions, strictly so-called, nor, on the other hand, to disturb the believers in any religion—though based largely (as most religions are) on imagination, mythology, and supernaturalism. I want to occupy, in such measure as we may be able to, the vast territory lying fallow between these two extremes, and, if possible, to form a connecting link between whatever is proved to be true and of real value in either field. The Press is now the only occupant of the intermediate ground I have attempted to describe, and printed matter, as you

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*The following lines by Lowell (great favorites with Uncle Job) seem appropriate here:—REP.

What! shall one monk, scarce known beyond his cell,
Front Rome's far-reaching bolts, and scorn her frown?
Brave Luther answered, YES; that thunder's swell
Rocked Europe, and discharmed the triple crown!

all know, is of three kinds—good, bad, and indifferent, but mostly of the two latter kinds. Millions are unable to read at all, and other millions poison their minds by reading only the reports of the police courts, and corrupt fiction.

This brief outline is all I can give you to-day. The details will, of course, have to depend in great measure upon circumstances, and upon the wishes and needs of the people.

There will be a business meeting of the members of the society in this place next Tuesday evening at 7 o'clock.

I have arranged with Dr. Pond to speak here this evening at 7:30. His subject will be, "How to Cheat the Doctor." All are invited.

I expect to speak from this platform again next Sunday morning at 10 o'clock—free to all. I should be greatly pleased to have some of the young people provide some suitable music for our meetings.

This meeting is closed.

REP. I have condensed some parts of Uncle Job's remarks considerably; for it was evidently an off-hand, familiar talk to his neighbors, and at times he explained his meaning with more minuteness than seems necessary to repeat here. There was no effort at elocution; but when he was speaking about the Infidels, his cheeks glowed slightly and the words came forth with a spontaneity and force that was truly eloquent.

It is needless to say that no further effort was made to disturb the meeting.

CHAPTER V.

AIMS OF THE NEW ORGANIZATION.

Rep. Dr. Pond lectured in the evening, according to appointment, to a full house. He took for his text that old saying that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." His remarks were practical and most excellent, consisting largely of instructions how to preserve health without the aid of physician or medicine; but the design of this volume does not permit a report of the lecture. He made an appointment for another lecture the next Sunday evening, when he promised to give some instruction in anatomy and physiology, and further remarks on the laws of health.

I asked and obtained permission to attend the business meeting Tuesday evening, and I took notes, as usual. Every charter member of the new organization was present, with Uncle Job in the chair. A good deal was said and done not necessary or important to be mentioned here. When all the members were seated near the platform, and silence prevailed—

Sawyer (*sitting on the platform*). It is my wish that the members of this organization shall constitute a *pure democracy*, or as nearly that as possible, at

least, while the membership is small; and we will begin now by electing a presiding officer for this meeting.

REP. Almost instantly some one nominated Job Sawyer for chairman, put his own motion, and declared it carried; and a secretary was also elected in like manner.

SAWYER (*still sitting*). You do not know what strength and hope it gives me to see every member in his place and evidently zealous in the new undertaking. I think my faith at this moment is at least equal to a grain of mustard-seed.

This is a business meeting, called for the purpose of perfecting our organization. I suppose we are entitled to be incorporated as a religious society, under the general laws of the State, but there are some features of those laws that I do not altogether like, and therefore, as there is no haste about it until we have property to manage, I shall give my vote in favor of waiting awhile. Yet I think we should at once have a constitution and suitable by-laws. This seems necessary in order to do business in an orderly and economical manner. They should be carefully framed, so as to *aid* and not retard us in our work, and ample provision should be made for prompt and easy amendment. Discrimination should be made between constitution and by-laws, so that matter belonging in one shall not be placed in the other. The constitution is the organic law, and should be brief and general in its provisions. The by-laws are special rules and regulations made under and by virtue of the authority of the constitution. I see no need of lengthy by-laws at the outset; in

fact, I think it better to let time and experience develop what is needed. A proper committee should be selected for this work before we adjourn to-night.

There are several persons, male and female, who have already made application for membership. A proper committee ought also to be appointed to investigate these applications (and others, if any shall be made), and report as to fitness, etc. It will take us some little time to get fully and efficiently organized, but we can and *should* commence at once on the main feature of our work—that is, to do all the good we can. To this end we must be careful not to preach or require anything that it is not within the nature of man to live up to ; but what we *do* preach or require, we must *practice* in letter and in spirit. Right here let me say that I think we should refrain from rich or ostentatious dress while in attendance here, or engaged in any church work. The orthodox churches have driven away from their societies a very large number of the most deserving poor and moderately well-to-do, by the proud dress and manners of the rich. It is not good manners (even if we take no higher view of it) to flaunt our good fortune in the faces of the less fortunate.

"Oh, it is excellent to have a giant's strength ; but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant."

I hope the ladies will organize a Sunday-school, with as many different classes as seem to be necessary or desirable. I find, notwithstanding education is free, that very many poor children get almost none at all. Perhaps nearly all of them learn to read more or less perfectly, but with a large percentage of them that is all. The ladies of the orthodox

churches are doing all they can to bring these children into their Sunday-schools, but the children do not seem to crave what is offered them there. I think scores of these children would be glad to come here and learn many of the useful things that they have been unable to learn in the public schools. Blackboard exercises and general object-teaching can be employed where it seems to be beneficial. Also the teacher might read selections from choice literature, suitable to the understanding of his class, and especially ought the elements of moral principles to be taught to every one of them, in order that they may grow up to be good citizens and useful members of society.

I am very much impressed with the idea that the most industrious people do not spend time enough in social intercourse. I therefore think we should set apart at least one evening in every week for a social meeting here, or in some other suitable place, where old and young, male and female, can meet in all respects as equals, and participate in such sports, games, or other entertainment as the assembly may decide to adopt for their recreation for the time being. I am not sure that it would not be wise to have some place under our management open at all times—a sort of *saloon*—where persons of either or both sexes can go at any time during reasonable hours and indulge in some kind of innocent recreation or amusement. It is a lamentable fact that all the places of resort within my knowledge are places where vice of one kind or another is practiced—drinking or gambling, or both, and sometimes even worse offenses against morality. I know it is said

by some that one may go into such places without contamination, but I think it is very difficult to do so. For instance, if a person goes into one of these places, even to sit awhile and read the newspapers, he feels that he is indebted to the house, and there is no way in which he can square the account but to buy something—a drink or a cigar—and custom requires him to "treat" one or more of those present —and there is always *somebody* at hand anxious to accept such an invitation. In this way the young form habits which frequently lead to terrible results. Man is a gregarious animal, and loves amusement. These natural wants it is the duty of society to supply in such manner that he shall not, at the same time, be led into vice.

> "Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
> That to be hated needs but to be seen;
> But, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

I am in favor of the freest commingling of the sexes in all places where it is proper for either to go. Dancing, when properly conducted, is an innocent and healthful exercise, and this room is well adapted to it. There are also many games played with cards, as well as the games of chess and checkers, and similar games, which many people are fond of, and which afford excellent training to the mental faculties. The game of billiards affords delightful exercise for both men and women; but at present we have no convenient place for it, and, besides, the tables are so expensive that we must only think of it as a future possibility.

All persons will not desire to participate in the same pleasures at the same time, as experience shows, and our social gatherings will divide themselves up into groups by the process of natural selection. This is one of God's laws, and it obtains in heaven as well as among men. If there is a future state for man (and I sincerely hope so), I conceive that it will not be necessary for God to put up bars to keep the wicked from the good; but "birds of a feather will flock together" there as well as here, in obedience to a natural law.

The question, Who is to be the parson or preacher of the new church? has given me more trouble than all other questions combined. I have discussed it privately with many of you, and by a unanimous verdict, "the lot has fallen upon Jonah." I feel that this is highly complimentary to me, and yet I know (as no one else knows) that I am not at all suited to such a post. Not to mention numerous deficiencies, I never undertook to make anything more than a short, extemporaneous speech in my life, and I am now "well stricken in years." Furthermore, I am afraid I am lazy. I have a feeling (no doubt the same entertained and acted upon by many an orthodox churchman) which tempts me to endeavor to escape the performance of my religious duties by *hiring*, and paying liberally, some one else to do them for me. I know this feeling is wrong, and I have therefore put it behind me, and I have decided to undertake to minister to this people for the present, but with the hope that some person more suitable and competent may soon be found to relieve me and carry forward the good work.

REP. Uncle Job here signified that he had nothing further to say, and by motions duly made, proper committees were appointed, in accordance with Uncle Job's suggestions; and it was also resolved that a meeting of the society, and such outsiders as the several members should see fit to invite, should be held for social intercourse and enjoyment, in Benson's Hall, on the Tuesday evening next. The meeting then adjourned.

CHAPTER VI.

NEW DEFINITIONS.

REP. On the following Sunday morning, before 10 o'clock, Benson's Hall was crowded. Precisely at the stroke of the clock, the choir (consisting of two male and two female voices, with a violin and flute accompaniment), rendered "Sweet Afton" in a most satisfactory manner. At the conclusion of the music, Uncle Job promptly took his place at the little desk, and, in the most grave and impressive manner, repeated the following words, which he seemed to adopt as a sort of text:

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed."

He then proceeded in substance as follows:

SAWYER. As our meetings will be distinguished by the absence of formal praying, which fact may lead to misunderstanding, and possibly to unjust criticism, even by persons not unfriendly to our general purposes, unless some explanation is made on our part, I have therefore determined to give briefly some of my views on the general subject of prayer in my remarks this morning, and to branch off into kindred or other subjects, and to enlarge upon them

from time to time as I may feel disposed. In treating these matters with satisfaction to myself, I shall be compelled to advert occasionally to some of my own personal experiences, which I promise you shall be sparingly done, for such references are exceedingly distasteful to me.

For well nigh forty years I have prayed without ceasing, but during all that time my prayers have been of the kind that are unexpressed; and yet I have no quarrel with those who take comfort in making, or feel it a duty to make, long, formulated prayers. They have the right to follow the dictates of their feelings, so long as they do no injury to others. Every *wish* is a prayer, whether "uttered or unexpressed." We are all continually wishing for something, either reasonable or unreasonable, and this is why I say I have prayed without ceasing. My soul yearns every day, and almost every hour of the day, with a fervent wish for the ability to right some wrong, or to do some positive good. But I have no faith that any prayer, however reasonable, or however eloquently and feelingly expressed, or however urgent the seeming necessity, ever was or ever will be *answered*, in any such sense as that expression is generally understood. The God I worship is not, in that sense, a "prayer-answering God." I witnessed an incident when a schoolboy that made an indelible impression on my mind, and perhaps it had something to do toward shaking my faith in the efficacy of prayer. A boy of fourteen, whom I will call John, was the son of praying parents—in fact, they were then known as "shouting Methodists"—and at the time in question, a "revival of religion" was in prog-

ress in the neighborhood where John and his parents resided. A large pine stump stood in the playground near the schoolhouse, which was often in the way, and greatly interfered with the children's games. One day the stump was especially annoying, and was receiving many maledictions, when John startled all of his fellows by announcing that he could remove it. He was asked how he would go to work to do it, all being anxious to lend him a helping hand. He said boldly that he could "pray it out." Some doubted this, while others believed it; but all urged him to try the experiment. At length the noble boy, with faith enough to remove a mountain (if faith alone could ever remove anything), fell upon his knees near the stump, and prayed most fervently, most feelingly, and most confidently for ten or fifteen minutes for the removal of the stump, the children meanwhile watching in breathless silence to see the stump move, and even the doubting ones being hopeful. John stopped praying and opened his eyes. He seemed surprised to see the stump still in its place, and he asked the boys if they hadn't seen the roots start. Being answered in the negative, he prayed again, more energetically than before, if that were possible; but he was confronted with failure again and again, until his companions sent up a roar of derisive laughter, whereupon poor John gave way to his disappointment and cried and rent his garments, and repented him (so to speak) in sackcloth and ashes. Poor fellow! he was never the same boy after that.

I was early taught, in the customary way, to get on my knees and utter verbal prayers, and I often

did so during my youth and young manhood; but I cannot remember the time, after little John's failure, when I did not rise from my knees with a sense of shame, and feeling more like an ignorant idolater than like an intelligent, reasoning being. I have frequently conversed with persons who, even while admitting that they do not know that their prayers are ever answered, yet claim that they derive great mental satisfaction from formal prayer; but it was never so with me.

Many years ago, when I was a young man, I was once so circumstanced that death from starvation and exposure to the elements seemed inevitable to myself and my helpless companion. No relief seemed possible from any human or earthly source. After making failures of several experiments, I became temporarily discouraged, and, to borrow the words of John Hay,

> "I jest flopped down on my marrow bones,
> Crotch deep in the snow, and prayed;"

or, rather, I *tried* to pray, but could not. Every word I uttered seemed like blasphemy. I felt like a criminal, and I stopped, and spent some little time in gloomy, most dismal meditation. But *something must be done.* I still had strength, and I shook myself and said aloud to my discouraged feeling, "Get thee behind me, Satan." In a twinkling Dr. Franklin's saying that God helps him who helps himself came into my mind, and almost in the same breath I was repeating these lines of Walter Scott:

> "My pass, brave Gael, in danger tried,
> Hangs in my belt and by my side."

I said to myself, "The way to seek God is not to prostrate one's self in chicken-hearted supplication, but to courageously study to find out his laws and to obey them." My former discouragement was at once changed into a feeling of extraordinary self-reliance, and I resolved that if I must die in that situation, I would not die the death of a coward, but valiantly fighting with all the might with which God had endowed me. The result was that I and my little companion were saved.

I have related this incident to my good Christian friend, Mrs. Evener, and she insists that my prayer was answered in the most conspicuous and unmistakable manner. But I answer that I *did not* pray. I *tried* to, but made a flat failure. My soul revolted at the very attempt. My friend responds that God took the will for the deed, and granted my wish before it was expressed. Be that as it may, it was with me a most profound religious experience, and I have never tried to give utterance to a prayer from that day to this; yet I feel that I have walked with God, and I have obeyed his commandments, in the light that he has given me to understand them, during the whole time since that event.

The experience I have mentioned, and the study and reflection induced by it, gave me a grander conception of God and his attributes than I had ever had before. My previous idea of God was substantially that he was a being in human shape, about as big as Goliath, with one all-seeing eye situated just above his nose; that he sat in space, cross-legged like a tailor or a Turk, governing creation by his arbitrary will, and threatening all mankind with eternal tor-

ment, excepting such as begged of him, like cripples, for salvation, and that even these had no guaranty of safety. No pagan ever carved from wood or stone a baser counterfeit of the Almighty than I had been led to do, in my imagination, by the teachings of the Christian religion. I had, in fact, created an idol—not technically a *graven* image, but none the less an idol—and it was before him, or it, that I saw, in my mind's eye, millions of Christians, Mohammedans, and Jews bowed down in abject fear, falsely called worship. I have talked on this subject with hundreds, if not thousands, of Christians, and I find that every one, when I bring him down to a fine point, has an imaginary idol, differing from mine more or less, perhaps, in form, but not at all in substance. Most of them will say at first that God is a spirit; but on closer inquiry it will be found that all have embodied that spirit into some form, more or less shadowy, which they always see in their mental vision when they pray or think of God. Is Christianity, then, only another (perhaps a higher) form of paganism. I fear so, in so far, at least, as the unthinking multitude is concerned. Have they not also idolized Christ?

That there is, and has been from the beginning, a Power, a Force, which, acting on Matter and controlled by Law, created and governs the Universe, there can be no question; but whether that Power or Force is embodied in an intelligent, sentient Supreme Being, in the sense usually implied by those words, will probably never be known in this mundane existence any better than it is now. In so far as it is given us to see and know, it may be

said that God is LAW, and it is in this sense that I habitually use the word God.

What we call natural law was never created, and it can not be destroyed nor changed. For illustration, take any known law of mathematics—the simple fact that two and two make four, for instance. Can it be conceived by the mind of man that there ever was a period in the past, however remote, when two and two could have made any greater or less sum than four? Does any one believe that a period will ever come in the future when that law will be changed? I declare to you, my friends, that no God ever had, or ever will have, the power to change it. So it is with all other laws. They have existed, and will continue to exist, from "everlasting to everlasting."

My orthodox friends admit the existence of the laws, but they assert that they must necessarily have been created by a pre-existing, higher power, and hence, from a supposed necessity, they have, in their imagination, and without proof, invented their Supreme Being, who, they believe, was not created, but always existed. If this doctrine of necessity be admitted, it seems to be just as necessary to take another step backward and assume a creator for the aforesaid Supreme Being, as it was to take the first step. But I deny the necessity in both cases. It is conceded that Matter, Force, and Law exist, and that they are constant and indestructible. It follows, then, as an axiom, that they were not created, but always existed. These elements, through the cycles of time and the processes of evolution, have wrought the situation we behold to-day. I draw, then, from

my premises, the conclusion, which all history and experience prove to be true, that God is inexorable; that he does not hear or answer our prayers; and that there is not, and never was, any such thing as a special providence or miracle. When events transpire which seem to have been produced by supernatural agencies, it is only our ignorance, or somebody's trickery, that makes them appear so. In the olden times, the sending of a message from New York to Chicago and getting an answer in an hour would have been called a miracle; but nobody calls it so now.

The question was asked of old, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" I answer, Yes, and, No. It is impossible for us to ever find him out in his entirety; but by diligent searching we shall find out eventually all that it is necessary for us to knew of him. We have learned many things already, and we are constantly finding out something new. Only recently the world was startled by the discovery of the principle which has been utilized in the telephone. Yet what we now know is but a drop in the bucket as compared with the unknown. Who can tell us what electricity is, or explain to us the secret of its mysterious power? Who knows by what subtle influence inanimate matter is made animate? What is mind? Whence came it, and whither does it go? By constant searching man will find out some of these things. God has placed us in the partial possession of a mighty engine, and has endowed us with minds whereby we may learn to run so much of it as may be beneficial to us. Archimedes claimed in his day to have discovered the power to move the earth,

if he could only find a place somewhere outside on which to stand; but I say to you, my brethren, that the power exists by means of which, when the proper springs and levers shall be found out (as they will yet be found out), a man may stand right here in Pinville and move the world.

Matter, Force, and Law constitute the true Trinity, though neither alone is equal to all. With only Matter and Force in existence, the world would be "without form and void;" but Law wrought order out of chaos, and, in a qualified sense, created the Universe. Hence, as I have said before, I usually mean the Law alone when I speak of God.

When I am stating my views on these subjects to my Christian friends, as I sometimes do, they frequently hold up both hands in horror, and exclaim that I am throwing away the Bible and all hope of a life beyond the grave. I do not think so. I am only clearing away the rubbish—the accumulations of thousands of years of ignorance and superstition—and getting down to the solid, bottom facts for a basis on which I hope we may be able to build a religious edifice whose every brick and timber shall be a known and admitted truth; and all the old material will be worked into the new structure that will bear the test. No man yet knows whether the mind of man has a conscious existence after the death of the body. We all *hope*, and some of us *believe*, that the mind (usually called the *soul*) does not die, but lives forever. But, like Patrick Henry, we should be "willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it." If there is a part of man which survives the grave, it is so by virtue of

some *law*, and our hopes, or fears, or wishes, or prayers cannot in any manner, or in any degree, change the fact. It is doubtful whether it is best for us that we should know what the future has in store for us; but whether so or not, it is certain that the very worst thing we can do is to deceive ourselves in regard to it. It is not wise to form any belief and to adhere to it inflexibly, before we know, by absolute knowledge, that it is a fact; or, at least, until it has been proven to be true by testimony that is above impeachment or criticism. If there is a life beyond this, a correct life here—living strictly within the letter and spirit of the Law—is the surest way to prepare for it. If we take good care of the present, the future will take care of itself. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." If we obey the Law during this life, we shall be ready for death when it comes. Death has no terror for the law-abiding man. He walks with God continually, and needs no time to prepare to meet him. He has an abiding faith that he will surely receive such measure of reward as his conduct merits, under the Law; and he borrows no trouble as to what the nature of his reward shall be, nor as to the manner in which it shall be meted out to him.

As to the Bible, I do not reject it by any means; and yet I regard it as purely the work of men, and treat it accordingly. Looked at in this light, it is a most excellent book, being a record of men's discoveries, experiences, and beliefs in the remote past. Much of it is fiction, just as men write fiction at the present day to illustrate what they believe to be true. Much of it is written in figurative language,

and never was intended to be understood literally. Some of it is absolutely false, in spirit as well as in letter, and was well known to be so by the persons who wrote those parts. The Bible was not written by one man, but by many men, and at widely different times. Doubtless hundreds, and possibly thousands, of other men wrote during the same periods whose works have perished; but those works that have been handed down to us, were treasured by the people as choice literature, and in the course of time, they came to be regarded as sacred, and the writers thereof as more than mortal. This was owing to the disposition of mankind, in an unenlightened state, to worship a hero and to magnify his virtues and his powers. Men are not entirely free from that disposition in our own day.

Our orthodox friends say we must either reject the Bible as false from beginning to end, or accept every word of it as the literal word of God. They take the latter alternative, but I take neither. Take that passage, if you please, where the writer says: "The lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell." The man who said that knew what he was talking about; and although he made use of figurative, even picturesque, language, he portrayed a living, every-day truth which commends itself to every person of experience. So here is one part of the Bible that I believe in. But when I read in another place that three men walked about in the heart of a fiery furnace which was seven times hotter than it

was commonly heated, and then came out after a considerable time without even the smell of fire about their garments, I don't believe it any more than I do the marvelous stories of Lemuel Gulliver, whose very name is a fable. Why may I not accept the record of Moses (if I want to) and reject that of Joshua, or *vice versa?* If I believe a part of what Matthew tells us, why must I also accept all that Luke says? When we read any other book, we find statements which we fully believe to be true, and other statements by the same author which our minds reject as unreasonable, absurd, and false. Why may we not treat the Bible authors in the same way? Certainly, if God wrote it (as alleged) there can be no danger that any falsehood will be found in it, and the more vigorously it is assailed the brighter it will shine. It is not God, my friends, but the devil, that is afraid of inquiry, investigation, and skepticism.

Some people believe that we could not distinguish right from wrong if it were not for the Bible. This is a great mistake. No doubt many of the Biblical writers thought they had discovered certain truths, and tried in their writings to set them forth for a guide to others; but later studies and experiences have shown many of the earlier suppositions to be erroneous. He is a fool who wilfully shuts his eyes to the light of the present day, and blindly accepts as truth the theories and guesses of unknown men who lived in a darker age. Those men, like the so-called Infidels of this day, were groping and reaching for the truth—were trying "by searching to find out God."

Looking from the human standpoint, it may be said that *sin* is the transgression of the Law. Every transgression, however small, is a sin, and is absolutely sure to bring the proper punishment upon the transgressor. God knows no such thing as mercy; but still his punishments are graded according to the magnitude of the offense. The working of the Law in this respect may be likened to the working of a vast machine. If we get a finger between the cogs, we lose a finger, or a part of one; and if we jump bodily into the machine, the penalty is death. Looked at from God's standpoint, there is no such thing as transgression of the Law. We can do nothing that will injure God; but the injury, if any, falls upon us. The machinery of the Universe moves majestically on, and whoever gets in the way will surely suffer. We are not required to obey the Law because it will please God; but because our own welfare requires it. Strict obedience brings harmony, peace, and happiness; while disobedience brings discord, war, and misery. The good things that we enjoy are our rewards, and the miseries that we suffer are our punishments. Whether all our rewards and punishments are received in this life, as some believe, we do not now know, and we may never know in this world. When we theorize on that subject, in our human way, it seems necessary, in order to satisfy our finite notions of eternal justice, that there must be a future state where each shall receive reward or punishment according to his deserts. I know men who are so hardened in sin that, according to my notion, nothing short of a term in a literal hell of fire and brimstone would be adequate

to balance the account against them. But "vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," and nature must have its course regardless of human judgments.

If we look at this question with the cold eye of philosophy, how does it look? Nature's motto seems to be "Excelsior." Everything we now see has been developed by slow processes from earlier and inferior forms. The prior forms have died, and their death and decay have enriched the soil for succeeding forms. This has been so with the works of man in the fields of science and religion, as well as in physical nature. It may be that no being has yet been sufficiently developed to inherit eternal life. I express no opinion. Tennyson has thought on this subject, and has written these words:

"A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?"

The answers to these questions must await the developments of time.

In our "searching to find God," what we know has been learned by experience—by actual experiment in every particular instance. When any act or word done or spoken, or permitted to be done or spoken, was found to produce either physical or mental suffering to any person, such act or word was called wrong, evil, sin; while acts and words which brought forth no such results were said to be good, right, or righteous. The first man must have had serious trouble. He did not know, until he had tried the

experiment, that fire would burn him. What he learned in the rough school of experience, he communicated to his children, so that they started in life wiser than their father. After a time men of great experience wrote down what they had learned for the benefit of others, just as people are stlll doing; and in this way the world has been filled with books. Much has been written that subsequent experience has proved to be incorrect, and we therefore find that it will not do to rely too implicitly upon what we read, but every person must apply the test to his own experience, and reject all error, regardless of authority. In the language of an ancient writer, we should "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

I have now consumed the time allotted to this exercise, and will therefore reserve what further I have to say for future occasions. What I have said thus far was not essential, in my opinion, to the progress of our work; but I deemed it wise to make a plain, blunt confession of faith, as it were, at the outset, in order that every person having a view to joining our church may do so with his eyes open, and can never truthfully say that he was induced to join us by false pretenses. I have endeavored to follow the wise advice of that great and good man who said of old, in substance: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify God. Think not that I have come to destroy the Law; for I have not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

Rep. Before dismissing the congregation, Uncle Job gave notice of the Sunday-school which he said would be opened for young and old that afternoon at

3 o'clock; Dr. Pond's lecture in the evening; the social entertainment for Tuesday night; and a business meeting for Friday night. He then said that the meeting would be closed with music, and added, in a very solemn and impressive manner: "May love, peace, good will, and happiness attend and possess us all. Amen."

The choir followed with, "Home, Sweet Home."

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOCIETY IN OPERATION—A LAWSUIT.

REP. Pursuant to the notice mentioned in the last chapter, one hundred and eighty-three persons of all ages and both sexes, but mostly children, assembled in the hall at 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, to be organized and classified into a Sunday-school. Mr. and Mrs. Holliday (both college graduates, and the latter a member of the Baptist church in good standing) had been previously chosen by common consent as superintendent and assistant-superintendent; and a sufficient corps of teachers, or conductors, for the several classes into which the school might be divided, had been likewise selected.

Mr. Holliday made a short speech at the opening, in which he said, among other things, that as this was their first gathering, but little could be done beyond a sort of examination to determine how the school could be best classified, so as to do most good to all. For to-day he had decided to classify them according to age, as follows, every class to occupy a particular portion of the room designated by the superintendent:

Class 1. All over forty years of age.

Class 2. All between twenty and forty.

Class 3. All between fifteen and twenty.
Class 4. All between twelve and fifteen.
Class 5. All between ten and twelve.
Class 6. All under ten years old.

Mr. Holliday further said, before dismissing the school to their several classes, that he hoped by next Sunday to procure some appropriate songs, after which the school would be opened and closed with singing, in which it would be desirable that all should join who could. He closed with a few earnest remarks, in which he urged the importance of good conduct on all occasions. He said the first duty of young and old was to learn what is right and what is wrong, and the next duty was faithfully and loyally to do the right on every occasion and under all circumstances, and to frown upon and condemn wrong conduct wherever seen. If everybody would follow this rule, he thought the world would be truly happy, and that no one could be completely happy who failed to follow it. He said it was the object of the school, now about to open, to enable as many as possible to perform the first duty—the learning of the right and the wrong; the second duty must be performed, for the most part, outside of the school in their every-day avocations.

The exercises of the day consisted mainly of the reading of selections by the teachers to their respective classes, and remarks by the teachers and discussions by the classes thereon.

In the evening Dr. Pond delivered a very instructive and entertaining lecture, giving in the course of it many valuable hints for the preservation of health. It was well attended and well received. At the

close he gave notice that on the following Sunday evening, lawyer Gibson would speak in that place on the subject, "How to Beat the Lawyers."

The social meeting Tuesday night was a very pleasant affair, though the house was somewhat too full for perfect enjoyment. The doors were opened at 7, and the house was cleared precisely at 10:30. One part of the floor was kept clear for those who wished to dance, and two well-played violins furnished the music. The dancing floor was occupied by somebody nearly all the evening. In another part of the room a number of little tables were placed at suitable distances from one another, and all were provided with either playing cards, or chess, checkers, or backgammon boards. These tables were all patronized, while a considerable number only visited or told anecdotes in a very sociable way. All were neatly dressed, but there was a conspicuous absence of everything rich or gaudy in the attire of anyone.

At the Friday evening business meeting, the committeee on constitution and by-laws was not ready to report, and was given another week. The committee on applications for membership reported favorably on twenty-six applications, and on six applications which they had investigated they were in doubt, and desired the advice of the meeting. They also said there were a number of other applications upon which for want of time, they were not prepared to report. The twenty-six whose applications had been favorably reported were received into full membership; and it was decided, after some debate, to receive the six as to whom the committee asked advice,

into a sort of *quasi* or probationary membership, without the right to vote, for six months, when further action would be taken on their applications.

It happened at this time that a lawsuit that had excited considerable local interest and feeling was on the trial calendar of a court of record at the county seat. All the parties resided in the immediate vicinity of Pinville, and Uncle Job was the witness on whose testimony the decision would turn. It seems that a man had commenced an action on a promissory note before Uncle Job as a justice of the peace, who, as was his custom, had induced the parties to compromise, and they had done so on the spot—the defendant paying the amount agreed upon —but no memorandum had been made of the settlement, and the note was not surrendered because the plaintiff claimed to have forgotten to bring it with him; he promised, however, to hand it to Uncle Job or to the defendant the next day. This was neglected, and soon afterwards the plaintiff died, and after his death his administrators, finding the note among the effects of the deceased, demanded payment of it from the defendant, who refused, whereupon they brought the suit in a court of record as above stated. Under the rules of evidence, the defendant could not be a witness in his own behalf, but he relied on the testimony of Uncle Job to prove the settlement and payment, while the plaintiffs (the administrators) only had to prove the signature to the note in order to make out their case; and it was rumored in Pinville that they expected to break down and destroy Uncle Job's testimony by showing that he was an Atheist or some sort of a "religious crank." By

this means the plaintiffs hoped to win their case regardless of right or justice. The trial was set down for Saturday morning, and Pinville turned out in force "to see the fun," as some of them said. Of course, I attended the trial and took notes as usual.

When the suit had been called, a jury duly impaneled, and plaintiffs' counsel had made a brief "opening," the note was duly proved and the plaintiffs rested. The defendant's counsel then made a brief statement of the defense, and called Job Sawyer as a witness, who was sworn on the Bible in the usual way, after which the following proceedings took place:

PLAINTIFFS' COUNSEL. If the Court please, before this witness gives any testimony, I desire to ask him a few questions to test his competency.

THE COURT. You may do so.

P. C. Mr. Sawyer, do you consider the oath you have just taken to be binding upon you?

SAWYER. I do.

P. C. Do you consider it binding upon your *conscience*, if you have such a thing?

SAWYER. Yes, sir.

P. C. In your mind, sir, from what source does the obligation upon you to tell the truth proceed—from the law of God, or the law of man?

SAWYER. From both.

P. C. But you don't believe in any God, do you?

DEFENDANTS' COUNSEL. I object.

THE COURT. I think the witness has shown himself competent, and that he should not be further questioned on this point at this time.

REP. The defendant's counsel then examined Uncle

Job at some length, proving the accord and satisfaction as claimed by the defendant, when the witness was turned over to the plaintiffs' counsel for cross-examination. The plaintiffs' counsel examined Mr. Sawyer at great length on the merits of the case, endeavoring to cross and entangle him, but without success. When this had ended, the examination proceeded as follows:

P. C. Now, Mr. Sawyer, you do not believe in any God, do you?

DEFENDANT'S COUNSEL objected and argued that the witness was protected from this sort of examination by the constitution of the State.

THE COURT. I think the prohibition of the constitution only extends to the question of the *competency* of the witness, and that his religious belief may still be inquired into as bearing upon the *credibility* of his testimony.

P. C. I repeat the question, sir; do you believe in any God?

SAWYER. Most assuredly I do. I believe ——

P. C. Hold on, sir. I don't want any stump speech from you, sir. I want to do the talking myself, and you will have enough to do, if you answer my questions by yes or no.

SAWYER. I have sworn to tell the whole truth, and when answering yes or no will only convey a half-truth, I must decline to answer in that way.

P. C. Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

SAWYER. Yes and no.

P. C. You are pretty cunning, Mr. Sawyer, but you can't inveigle me into your trap. I shall not give you an opportunity to make a stump speech by

asking you to explain what you mean by your double answer. Do you believe that Jesus Christ was the son of God?

SAWYER. Yes, sir. I believe ——

P. C. Hold on again. You must answer my questions and stop. You have recently set yourself up as a prophet of some sort of new-fangled religion, haven't you?

SAWYER. No, sir. I have ——

P. C. Stop now. Haven't you started a new church, so-called, down at Pinville, in which prayer is not permitted?

SAWYER. No, sir. We have a society there ——

P. C. Stop, stop.

SAWYER. If you will let me explain, I will make it all clear to you.

P. C. You are entirely too anxious to explain. You are not a praying man yourself, are you, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER. I am, sir. I ——

P. C. Hold on, sir. I am done with you now. You are too tough a customer for me to deal with.

DEFENDANT'S COUNSEL. Do you wish to make any explanation, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER. Unless some explanation is necessary for the purpose of this trial, I do not know that I do. Inasmuch, however, as the plaintiffs' counsel seems to have heard something which he thinks derogatory to me, I will say that I have long claimed to be a religious man. I admit that my religion is not in all respects orthodox, as orthodoxy is now understood, but throughout a not very short and somewhat checkered life I have always obeyed, to the best of my ability, the injunction of Jesus Christ to render

unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

REP. Here the audience made a considerable demonstration of applause, which awoke the sheriff and his deputies to activity, and was sternly rebuked by the Court. When order was restored, Uncle Job continued:

SAWYER. I will only say further that at this moment, looking back over my whole life, my conscience is void of offense toward God and toward man.

REP. The opposing counsel agreed to submit the case to the jury on the charge of the Court, without summing up. The judge charged the jury briefly without referring to the cross-examination of Uncle Job. The jury retired about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and remained out until sent for by the Court at 8:30 in the evening. In answer to the clerk's inquiry they said they had not agreed, and that they thought an agreement would be impossible. The judge said he regarded the case as a very plain one; that he could see no chance for controversy — in fact, that it was so one-sided a case that, if he had been asked at the proper time to take it away from the jury and decide it himself (to *direct* them what verdict to render), he would have done so; but now the case was with them, and they must decide it or remain over Sunday. He then ordered them back to their room, where they remained until 10 o'clock, when he again sent for them, and finding them still unable to agree, he discharged them. I asked the judge (with whom I was well acquainted) what would have been the probable *finale* if the jury had found for the plaintiffs. He

said there was no *probable* about it; but that I could consider it *absolutely certain* that he would have set aside such a verdict quicker than lightning.

The conduct of the jury was so singular that considerable pains were taken to ascertain the names of the unreasonable jurors and their motives; and the result of the inquiry can be told in a few words. Mr. Jingleberry was the only juror who had strenuously favored the plaintiffs; but there were five others who were willing to decide *any* way rather than remain over Sunday. Jingleberry declared that he would remain there till the ants carried him out through the key-hole before he would agree to find for the defendant. He said he had known old Job Sawyer by reputation, for years, and that he had always had the name of being a black-hearted old Atheist; that he (Jingleberry) had no confidence in the old devil's testimony, and that he had no doubt that the defendant and old Sawyer had put up a job to beat the dead man's estate and divide the booty, and much else of the same sort. One of the court constables stated very positively that during the dinner hour (before the trial was concluded) he had accidentally stumbled upon one of the plaintiffs in close consultation with Mr. Jingleberry in a secluded place under the stairs leading to the court-room; that they seemed to be much startled by the intrusion, and appeared to be trying to hide something in their pockets. The constable said he saw no money, but the motions satisfied him that money had passed from the plaintiff to the juror then and there. As bearing on the probability of the constable's conjecture it should be further said that when Tweed's

ring was exposed in the city of New York, this Mr. Jingleberry's name was found on the city pay-roll at $175 per month, although he lived more than two hundred miles from the city, and had not been missed by his neighbors, except about two days in every month, when he had a mysterious errand somewhere eastward. This fact had been thoroughly exposed years before the trial in question, and yet the officials, whose duty it is to select proper persons for jury duty, had deliberately certified that this man was of "fair character and approved integrity."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRY-SQUARE APPLIED.

REP. Sunday morning the hall was packed and jammed as full as it could be some time before the hour to open the meeting. After the singing was concluded, Uncle Job commenced speaking as follows:

SAWYER. I have received a letter through the post-office, in the handwriting of a woman, but without signature, in which my idea that God has no mercy nor forgiveness for wrong-doers is argued against very vigorously. She says that if my theory is correct it will destroy all hope of salvation for ninety-nine hundredths of the human family, if not for all.

I am very glad that the sister has felt free to write me this letter, and I hope every one who wishes to ask me any reasonable question, or to combat any of my opinions in a proper spirit, will feel free to do so. Such communications may be sent through the post-office, or handed to me personally, or laid on this table at any time before the opening of any meeting.

I must say, in answer to my gentle correspondent, in the first place, that the cause of true religion will not be promoted by accepting any proposition as sound simply because it seems to satisfy our feelings

or hopes. That would be equivalent to believing a thing true because we desire it to be so.

I think the doctrine of God's infinite mercy and forgiveness is a very pernicious and dangerous one, and is a stumbling-block in the way of salvation. I think there would be far less sin committed than there is now if this baneful doctrine could be banished from the minds of men. The doctrine, as I understand it, amounts to this: A man may lead a long life of wickedness, be steeped in the most vile iniquity, never have done a good act in his whole life, may have committed countless murders, and yet if he repents at the eleventh hour—even on the gallows—he will be instantly forgiven, all his sins liquidated, dissolved, washed out, and he will forever after be just as happy, and receive the same rewards, as another man who has always led a pure and perfect life. This cannot be true, for God is just, and this is not just. Yet I have heard a judge preach it, in the presence of hundreds of people, to a brutal murderer upon whom he was about to pronounce the sentence of death. If this doctrine is true, it puts a premium upon sin and crime. If the righteous and the wicked are to receive the same reward, what incentive does a man have to be righteous? I have positive knowledge that this doctrine is full of mischief, because men have confessed to me that they have done wrong, knowingly and wilfully, with the intention to afterwards repent and be forgiven; and they have owned to me that if they had not believed in this doctrine of repentance and forgiveness, and relied upon it for indemnity, they could not have been tempted to do the wrong. I believe

there are thousands and millions of so-called Christian people who habitually do what they know to be wrong, relying upon this mischievous doctrine, who would be righteous men and women if they held my views instead. They seem to be willing to barter away the certain rewards that are meted out in this world for good deeds, in exchange for hoped-for rewards in a supposed but uncertain world to come.

To my mind there is something anomalous, incongruous, absurd, in using these two words, *repent* and *forgive*, in one and the same breath. What is repentance? It is to feel the keenest sorrow, remorse, anguish for some wrong done. The moment a man begins to repent, in that same moment he begins to suffer the torments of the damned. True repentance is *hell*, and I can see no hope of redemption therefrom, except through reparation of the wrong. If the mind lives after death, and reparation have not been made, or be impossible, the hell must continue for ever and ever; and if the mind becomes more highly enlightened by its deliverance from the clogs of flesh, as some believe, then it must follow that the anguish of repentance is correspondingly increased in the other world. But it is not necessary to pursue the theory beyond the grave, for sinners find a good deal of hell in this life. The transgressor makes his own hell just as surely as effect follows cause. To illustrate my meaning, I will call your attention to a man, whom some of you know, who suddenly grew very rich while holding certain close relations with the corrupt reign of Tweed, in the city and state of New York. He now goes robed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every

day ; but he is despised and execrated by every one who understands his history, and he fully realizes it. His own blood relatives feel disgraced by the relationship, and even the obsequious creatures who play the sycophant about him for portions of his ill-gotten gold, sneer and crack their jokes at his expense whenever his back is turned. I believe he is as much in hell to-day as is possible in this world, and this is because he is penitent. I believe he is so truly penitent, so terribly miserable, that, if he had sufficient courage, he would publicly confess his sin, and endeavor to make reparation ; but this state of mind only adds fuel to the flames of his torment. Every dollar of his unlawfully-acquired wealth raises its separate blister upon his sensitive conscience. He is reaping the legitimate fruit of his conduct, and no one within the sound of my voice would be willing to bear his burden for all of his wealth. I believe this man has already been punished so severely in this life that, if he dared make the confession, he would exclaim to the world, in the language of Cardinal Wolsey, "Corruption wins not more than honesty." And I also believe he would concur in the advice given by the same penitent cardinal to his friend Cromwell : "Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, thy God's, and Truth's ; then if thou fallest, O Cromwell, thou fallest a blessed martyr." Let us draw an instructive lesson from this man's corrupt career and bitter end. Let us not covet his corruptly-won riches, nor untruly conceive him to be happy in his gilded equipage ; but on the contrary, let us remember the internal and eternal anguish with which his soul is being consumed ; and

then we shall shun him and the wicked path he has followed as we would shun pestilence. Let us constantly apply to him in our thoughts the sentiment that, "living, he has forfeited fair renown, and that, doubly dying, he will go down to the vile dust from which he sprung, unwept, unhonored, and unsung." In this way we can create a sort of artificial hell which will have as wholesome an influence on the conduct of men as the orthodox one.

I have made a rather lame effort to explain my theory in as few words as possible. Nobody is obliged to accept it or believe it. I cannot swear that my theory is correct (though I believe it is), but I feel certain that a belief in it, and practice accordingly, will tend to make men better in this world, while it can in no way interfere with salvation according to the orthodox plan.

I now turn to the subject which I have had in mind to talk about to-day. At quite an early date in my adult life, I began to search for some short and simple rule of conduct which should be as nearly infallible as possible, and applicable at once to all the relations and conditions of life. All the short rules that have ever been formulated for that purpose, so far as I was able to find them, seemed to me to be more or less defective. Some twenty-five hundred years ago Confucius (whom Christians call a heathen) laid down this rule, in substance: "That which you would not have another do to you, do ye not the same to him." Some five or six hundred years later, Christ introduced what is known as the Golden Rule, as follows: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

I have heard a Christian minister argue in the pulpit that Christ's rule was much the better of the two; but I confess that I cannot see it so. Both rules are most excellent so far as they go; but either, taken alone, I think, falls far short of perfection as a guide to be relied upon under all circumstances. A man cannot go far wrong if he follows with care and in the proper spirit the rule of Confucius; but there are many good acts which go to make up a noble life which are not enjoined by it. On the other hand, if we should follow Christ's rule strictly and exclusively, we might do many things wrong without violating the rule. Reduced down to cold logic, the Golden Rule amounts to about this: If I wish a man to give me a thousand dollars, I must first give him an equal sum. If he happens to be the right kind of man, he will then return the compliment by giving me a thousand dollars, or its equivalent, so that I will be exactly even, and gain nothing by the operation. Such a performance would be folly. But if the man should happen to be one of the *wrong* kind, he would keep my gift without rendering any equivalent, in which case I would be just so much out of pocket. This is, of course, an extreme and cold view. It may be said that we ought to do as we would be done by without thought of any return; but the rule has not been much practiced in that way within my observation.

I should, perhaps, when speaking of the rule of Confucius, have mentioned the most glaring defect in it. Without multiplying instances, I will simply say that I would be permitted by that rule to make a man drunk, if I would be willing to have him do

the same to me. So it may be said also of the Golden Rule, that if I am particularly desirous of having a man make me drunk, the rule commands me to first make him drunk. In short, both of these rules seek to control the acts of men, not as questions of right or wrong, but wholly according to the selfish wishes or feelings of the actors.

After much study and reflection, I finally adopted a rule which has been my daily and hourly companion and guide for many years, under all circumstances and conditions. It is this: "Every act or word that will result in injury to anybody, is wrong, and is prohibited. No other act or word is prohibited." After using this rule constantly for some time, I began to call it my *try-square* from the similarity, in the manner of its use, to the little implement called by that name used by carpenters and some other mechanics to determine whether their work is square and correct. Whenever I have any doubt about the propriety of any act or word which I would like to do or say, I just clap on my try-square in all the different places where there is any doubt, and if I find that any one will be likely to be injured in person, property, reputation, or feelings, I refrain from doing the act or speaking the word. There are very many acts which one may do or not do without injury to anybody, in either case, and all such acts one may do or not do, at his pleasure. There are also many acts of charity and generosity which one may do or not at pleasure; but in reference to such things, my experience instructs me that more pleasure is derived from the doing than the not doing, both in the doer and the *doee*, provided always, as the lawyers say,

that the doer does not injure himself by his generosity; for in applying the try-square, one must be as mindful of himself as he is of others; but he should be careful that selfishness does not play too important a part in determining his action. If this rule is fairly and honestly applied, with the aid of a well-trained conscience, I think it will never lead anybody very far astray.

Some of my acquaintances, who have heard me speak of my try-square, have discussed the question with me, and have presented the matter in a good many different lights. One asked me not long ago how the try-square rule would have worked in the case of the man who fell among thieves, mentioned in the New Testament. I answer that the try-square would have compelled me to do just as the good Samaritan did. If I had been in his place (or of the priest or the Levite who passed by on the other side), and if I could have had any doubt about my duty towards the suffering man, I would have brought my try-square into requisition, and would have said to myself somewhat in this wise: "There lies a fellow-mortal who has met with misfortune. I am where I can help him without injury to myself. If I leave him where he is, my act in leaving him will cause him still greater suffering, and may cause his death. My duty, then, plainly is to dress his wounds, take him to an inn, and to leave with him something more than two pence." But in a case like that, a man who has any of the milk of human kindness in his breast will not need the try-square to tell him what he ought to do. There is a grand satisfaction that one always feels in the doing of generous deeds,

and that satisfied feeling lives forever, and affords continual recompense for whatever sacrifice one has made. That kind of compensation undoubtedly was the reward received by the Samaritan for his kindness. And oh, how mean, how contemptible, how devoid of all self-respect must the priest and Levite have felt in their own minds as long as they lived, whenever they thought of the poor, unfortunate man whom, in their selfishness, they had left to suffer and to die!

A man once asked me how the try-square would work in the case of a man who commits adultery without his wife's knowing or ever hearing of it; and he quoted Shakspere as saying, in reference to such cases, that a person who is robbed and don't know it is not robbed at all. I answer that the knowledge, or want of it, on the part of the injured person makes no difference whatever in the quality of the act. A clerk may filch money from the till of his employer, and the employer may never realize it, but he is wronged to the same extent as though he knew it, and the clerk is all the same a thief. But the case of adultery is somewhat different. God has planted in the human mind that feeling or sentiment which requires absolute purity and fidelity in both partners to a true marriage; and, in regard to the question we are now speaking of, it does not matter whether the marriage is a *natural* or a *legal* one, for we sometimes see a couple as thoroughly and truly married by a union of love, without the legal tie, as though all the legal forms had been administered. No truly married person could ever consent to allow his partner to commit adultery, not even if it could be done

without his knowledge; and, therefore, if such truly married person, when tempted to commit the offense, would pause and apply his try-square, and ask himself whether he would be willing to have his absent partner commit a similar act, and then himself do as he would wish his partner to do under similar circumstances, no adultery would be committed. The same reasoning will apply to unmarried persons, for no one of pure instincts would willingly and knowingly take for husband or wife a person who had previously been defiled.

I was once condemning gambling in the presence of a man who had heard me speak of my try-square, and he took me up quite sharply, and stoutly argued that gambling could not be condemned by the try-square rule. He maintained that if several men of ample fortunes should play for small stakes it could do no harm to any one. I frankly confess that if they would always confine themselves to very small stakes, and would be careful to do their playing strictly in private so as not to set an example for others, and would not spend time in that way that could be better employed in other pursuits, no very great amount of harm would be likely to flow from it. But we all know that men who gamble do not, and *will* not, confine themselves to small stakes. We know that they soon get bold, and do their gambling in places more or less public, where their example is contagious. We know also that the habit is apt to grow upon them until they finally spend very much of their time in some sort of gambling, to the detriment alike of themselves and those dependent upon them. Sooner or later gamblers will play for stakes

large enough to ruin them in case of loss, no matter how large their fortunes may be. We know, too, that thousands, having families that need every cent of their money and every minute of their time, spend their time and money in gambling, thereby causing great suffering to their families. We should also remember that gambling frequently leads those who engage in it into the habit of using intoxicating liquors to excess, and that the two vices together cause thousands and millions of innocent people to be dragged down in misery and wretchedness to the grave. The good example of men of large means and ample leisure would have great influence in checking these and all other vices, while the bad example of such men would, of course, have a contrary effect. The try-square prohibits a bad example just as positively and certainly as it does any other improper act. Therefore, taking all these reasons into consideration (and still other reasons might be mentioned), I warn all men never to gamble, even for the smallest stake.

A similar examination and application of the try-square will condemn the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, even in the slightest degree. For more than twenty years I have not tasted any kind of intoxicating beverage—not because I was afraid of becoming a drunkard, but because I knew that countless millions had been ruined by its use, and I was prohibited by the try-square from setting an example which might be a stumbling-block to my fellow-men.

I was considerably puzzled at one time with the fact that the try-square seemed, under certain cir-

cumstances, to justify lying and deception. I studied over this a good deal, because I supposed it must be a defect in the rule, for I had always been taught that lying and deception could never be justified or made proper in any emergency whatever, though they might sometimes be *forgiven* when employed to prevent the perpetration of some greater wrong. At last I divided lying and deception into two classes: (1) those which can injure nobody, but may even be a positive benefit; (2) those which will injure somebody. The first class is not condemned by the try-square, and I hold that that class may be employed without doing wrong in all cases where necessity seems to require it; but the second class is most emphatically condemned by the try-square, and should never be resorted to under any circumstances whatever. I know some of the very best Christian people who occasionally employ the first class of lies and deception, but they always seem to think they have done something wrong for which they must ask God's forgiveness. I contend that such acts are not wrong. To illustrate this a little, suppose a busybody should ask me what I intend to have for dinner to-day, and suppose further that I am expecting to have a sort of picked-up dinner that I can't take much pride in. Now, here I have three ways of getting along with the troublesome question: (1) I can tell the truth, which will be humiliating to me; (2) I can tell him that it is none of his business, which will be humiliating to him, and may hurt his feelings even beyond mere humiliation; (3) I can lie to him, and say that I expect to dine on roast turkey, which will neither humiliate nor injure either

of us, or anybody else. The try-square points out the third way as the least objectionable, unless the case is one where a good snubbing would be a positive benefit to the busy-body, and if so, the second way might be employed to advantage. Again, it is said that women sometimes lie and deceive with reference to their ages. When this can be done without injury to any one, there is no wrong in it; but if a woman is sought in marriage, it will be just as wrong for her to lie to, or deceive, her intended husband as to her age as it would be to steal his money. One more illustration. You awake in the night and hear burglars in the house. You have no weapon, but you grasp a candlestick as if it were a pistol, and threatening to shoot the burglars, you thus drive them from the house. You have done the burglars no wrong, but, on the contrary, you have done yourself a great good; yet I have heard men gravely argue that such action on your part would be a sin for which you would be compelled to answer to God. I deny it, and contend that if you fail to employ such means when they are within reach, you would be guilty of a sin for which you would be likely to answer on the spot.

Men who make a business of detecting crime habitually practice lying and deception in their vocation, and for that reason their calling has been looked down upon as disreputable by many good people; but their practice is commended by the try-square as right and proper, and I maintain that their profession is as honorable a one as any other.

I shall probably have occasion to speak further in reference to the try-square hereafter, but I have now

reached the limit of time prescribed for this talk, and must therefore stop short where I am, with only an additional word of advice. Lying and deception should be resorted to with the utmost caution. Few cases will be found, in actual practice, where truth will not serve better than falsehood. If you frequently lie, or deceive, when necessity does not clearly require it, you will soon gain a reputation for unreliability among your acquaintances, which will be a positive injury to yourself, and will thus prove that you have violated the try-square rule.

In compliance with the request of several persons, it has been decided to hold the regular Sunday meetings at 3 o'clock in the afternoon until further notice. One of the persons making this request is Gustavus Nash. He wants to attend our meetings, but he says, in his rough way, that, in his great hurry to get ready in time, he cuts his face and tears his undergarments, and finally reaches here in no proper frame of mind to enjoy, or get most advantage out of the meeting.

After to-day the Sunday-school will commence at 10:30, and end at 12:30.

Mr. Gibson will speak in this place this evening at 7:30; but hereafter the evening service will be discontinued as a regular thing, though we hope to occasionally have something produced for our instruction on that evening, and whenever we do, timely notice will be given.

At the close of the singing, the audience will consider themselves dismissed, with the prayer of their pastor that every one will give the try-square a fair and honest trial.

CHAPTER IX.

A FUNERAL—WHAT IS DEATH?—BY-LAWS OF THE NEW CHURCH—THE PARSON'S WEAKNESS.

REP. The Sunday evening meeting was fairly well attended, notwithstanding rain and mud. Mr. Gibson began by saying that the way to beat the lawyers was to do exactly contrary to the way most people attempt to do it—that is, they should go to the lawyer *before* they got into trouble instead of *afterwards*. The old saying that "a stitch in time saves nine" is just as true when applied to business transactions as it is in domestic affairs. He had known instances where from two to five dollars paid to a good lawyer for advice before closing a bargain would have saved thousands of dollars and years of litigation and anxiety. He said that, if the public interest should warrant it, he intended to give a series of lectures on human law, commencing as near its inception as possible, and briefly showing its objects and development, and finally coming down to particular laws which all need to understand for the proper regulation of their daily conduct.

The social meeting Tuesday night passed off very pleasantly in about the same manner as the first one previously described.

Wednesday of this week an old gentleman, father

of one of the members of the church, was to be buried, and Uncle Job was called upon to conduct the funeral obsequies. Before consenting to do so, he made careful inquiry to find whether all the members of the family of the deceased had joined in choosing him, and found that several members would have preferred to have the services conducted with prayer. On learning this, he at once advised a compromise by the calling in of some praying man to assist, so that all might be satisfied so far as possible. This was finally agreed to, but then it was found that none of the regular salaried ministers of orthodox denominations would join with Mr. Sawyer in the ceremonies. Uncle Job then offered to withdraw entirely, saying that he thought more harm would come from having an unpleasantness over a corpse than would follow a yielding on one side or the other. He said he had great respect for the feelings of those who conscientiously believed in the efficacy of prayer, and he would be very unwilling to do anything to wound the feelings of such persons, unless a principle should be involved, and in that event feelings would have to be disregarded. His friends said they were as conscientious as those who believed in prayer, and they refused to consent to his proposed withdrawal. At length an old Methodist clergyman, living in the place, named Sholes, who had not followed his profession for several years, was applied to, and he readily consented, saying that he did not see how he could serve God to better advantage than in the way requested. In a preliminary conference between Uncle Job and Elder Sholes, it was agreed that the elder should proceed with the ordinary ser-

vices in his own way down to the point where some sort of preaching is usually introduced, when Uncle Job was to make such remarks or discourse as he thought proper, after which the elder was to follow with further remarks, if he desired, and close the exercises in his own way. This plan was carried out, and at the proper time, Uncle Job, with great dignity and solemnity, occupied about twenty-five minutes in remarks of his own, winding up by reading the whole of Gray's "Elegy." In the course of his talk he said:

SAWYER. No words or ceremony of ours can in any manner affect the dead—neither the part that has flown, nor the part that we are about to return to its original dust—but it is proper that we embrace occasions like this to draw from them useful lessons for the living. If I knew of any grave faults in the character or conduct of the deceased, I should feel it my duty at this time to point them out, and to endeavor to give such warning and instruction to the living as would cause them to correct any similar imperfections in themselves. But, happily, after a long and intimate acquaintance with the departed one, I am glad to say that I never found any evil in him. He never made what is ordinarily called a profession of religion, yet he was one of the most faithful servants of God that I ever knew, and the high esteem in which he was held by all of his acquaintances and the fair fame which he enjoyed among those who only knew him by hearsay gave him a fair measure of *reward*, even in his life-time, for his goodness. That is one of God's ways of rewarding his good servants. Why can not, why *will*

not, all mankind lead as proper lives as the one that has so recently gone out? If they would (and they could if they would), all prisons, all court-houses—in short, all the machinery of human government—could be entirely done away with. Let us resolve here and now, in the solemn presence of the dead, that we will henceforth do all that in us lies to bring about such a happy state of things.

Socrates said, "No man knows what death is, yet men fear it as if they knew it to be the worst of all evils;" and now, after more than two thousand years of strife, persecution, torture, burnings at the stake, and crucifixions, over that and kindred questions, we know no more what death is, nor its meaning, than was known in the days of Socrates. We are here to-day in the presence of an impenetrable and awful mystery; and although we know that no prayer of ours can lift the vail, yet each of us is silently asking himself, "What is death?" But, after all, death is no more a mystery than life. Whence and what is that subtle and potent principle which gathers, organizes, and holds together, for a brief space, particles of cold, dead matter, and constitutes them a living being? Whencesoever and whatsoever the principle is, we have named it *life*. When this principle is present, we say the body is alive. When it is absent, we say the body is dead. Life is positive; death is negative. Life is something; death is nothing. Is not life a very high form of Force—somewhat like heat, though higher? We see a glowing iron and we say the iron is hot; but at length the glow ceases, and then we say the iron is cold. Heat is positive; cold is negative. Heat is some-

thing; cold is nothing. The heat does not die, but it becomes diffused and changed into other forms of Force. May it not be so also with life? The matter which composes the body we know to be indestructible, although it dissolves and readily changes its form. So, too, the principle that gave it motion (the life principle) is also indestructible, and will live forever. But the serious question for us is, Does this principle—life, mind, soul, spirit, or whatever name we choose to call it by—does it retain its identity after it leaves the body, or is it dissolved and diffused and changed into other forms, like heat, or like the dust of the body? This question can not now be answered; but we do know what is, perhaps, sufficient for our present need—that death is just as natural—just as much ordained of God—as life; and consequently it should be no more feared nor dreaded than life: that is, when the faculties of mind and body have become ripe for death. God has so made us that while the body and mind are vigorous and healthy, we tenaciously cling to life; but when the faculties have become worn out, or otherwise impaired, we easily become reconciled to die. This was eminently so with my late friend, whose lifeless body now reposes in our midst. At seventy years of age he could not believe that he could ever be willing to die; but at eighty-eight he was even anxious for the final change. He was fully ripened for the harvest, and his demise is no more a proper subject for regret than the cutting of the bending grain when ready for the sickle.

Rep. At the Friday evening business meeting several new members were admitted into the church,

but the most important business done was the adoption of a constitution and by-laws for the future government of the church. As they are short, I give them here entire:

CONSTITUTION.

NAME. The name of this organization is "The Church of Practical Religion."

OBJECT. The aim and object of this Church is to teach mankind all things essential for their proper guidance and happiness in this life, which is deemed to be the true service of God.

MEMBERSHIP. All persons who have been accepted as members of this Church prior to the adoption of this constitution shall be deemed charter members. All others hereafter accepted shall have equal rights with the charter members by subscribing this constitution and the by-laws duly made under the same.

The only creed established by this Church is the rule known as the *Try-Square*, and is defined as follows: "Every act or word that will result in injury to anybody is wrong and is prohibited. No other act or word is prohibited." No person who does not, in good faith, believe in this rule, and practice in accordance therewith, shall be accepted as a member of this Church; and all members who wilfully violate this rule, or the law of the land, shall be expelled. Persons who have led lives of crime or shame, or who have made bad *slips* backward in a general course of good conduct, may, after reformation, be admitted into full membership; but each of these shall have a little cross fixed against his name where it is subscribed to this constitution—said cross to be in either red or green ink, as may be decided by a vote of the Church at a business meeting; the red cross to designate those who have been the hardest cases, and the green cross to designate the milder cases.*

GOVERNMENT. The government of this Church shall be republican in form and in fact. One half of all members in good standing residing within five miles of the place where the regular meet-

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* This idea of the crosses was Uncle Job's. He said everybody, and especially the young, should be taught that sin will always leave an indelible stain.—REP.

ings are held shall be necessary to constitute a quorum to do business. A majority of the members present at any business meeting may make any by-law, or pass any resolution or regulation by them deemed necessary or proper, within the general scope and object of the Church, except to accept new members, or to expel a member. No new member shall be accepted, nor any member expelled, without a three-fourths vote of all members present at any meeting.

No member shall be expelled without an impartial trial and an opportunity to defend himself.

By-Laws. Immediately after the adoption of this constitution, such by-laws shall be framed and enacted in accordance therewith as shall be deemed suitable and necessary to carry this constitution into effective operation, and the same may be amended, or added to, from time to time, as occasion may require.

Amendments. This constitution may be amended in any respect desired by a two-thirds vote of all the members present and having a right to vote at any business meeting, but before any proposed amendment shall be declared adopted, it shall have been publicly read, and a motion for its adoption made, in a regular business meeting, and such motion shall lie over at least one week before final action shall be taken thereon.

BY-LAWS.

Business Meetings. Regular business meetings of this Church shall be held on the first Friday in the months of January, April, July, and October, at 7:30 P.M., at such place as may be provided for the purpose by the executive committee. Regular business meetings may also be specially called by the executive committee whenever in their judgment the exigency requires it, by giving three days' written or printed notice thereof through the post-office to all members entitled to vote at such meeting.

Committees. Immediately after the adoption of this constitution and these by-laws, the following standing committees shall be elected for one year, and until their successors shall be duly chosen in like manner.

(1) A committee of three on applications for membership, whose duty it shall be to make searching inquiry, and to report in writing their conclusion, as to the fitness of any and all applicants for membership.

(2) An executive committee of five, which shall include the acting pastor, whose duty it shall be to look after the general interest and management of the Church when business meetings are not in session and can not be conveniently called, and to do such other business connected with the Church government as may, from time to time, be directed by any business meeting of the Church.

(3) A committee of five, of whom the acting pastor shall not be one, whose duty it shall be to sit as often as may be necessary and hear all charges of improper conduct against any member, and the defense of said member. The committee shall give the defendant reasonable notice in writing of the time and place of the trial, together with a copy of the charges and specifications against him, and shall hear and record all evidence offered, *pro* and *con*, not manifestly impertinent, and shall report the evidence taken by them and their conclusions thereon to the next regular business meeting of the Church after the termination of the hearing before them, but further time for making such report may be granted by said meeting for good cause shown.

(4) A committee of one, to be called the prosecutor, whose duty it shall be to conduct the prosecution of every member against whom charges are made, at every step, from beginning to end, including a proper draft of the charges and specifications.

Proceedings for Expulsion. On the final report of the committee recommending the expulsion of a member, the committee shall read before the meeting only such portions of the evidence as may be required by the prosecutor, or by the defendant, or by a member of the meeting, and after the reading of all the evidence required by any party or member, as well as the conclusions of the committee, the prosecutor and the defendant shall have the right to argue their respective sides of the case before the meeting for such length of time as the meeting may prescribe—the defendant being allowed to speak last. The defendant may be represented by counsel at every stage of his defense, if he so desire. The acting pastor shall not be entitled to vote on the question of the guilt, expulsion, or punishment of a member; but he may, if he thinks proper, give the meeting his opinion as to what decision should be rendered, and for this purpose, he may call their attention to such portions of the evidence and the conclusions of the committee as he desires to.

Sunday Exercises, &c. The present arrangement in reference

to Sunday exercises, instruction, and social entertainments shall be continued until modified or dispensed with by resolution duly passed at a regular business meeting of the Church. Places of meeting for all purposes shall be provided by the executive committee.

ADDITIONAL BY-LAWS. Every resolution of a permanent nature hereafter duly passed by a regular business meeting shall be tacked to these by-laws and become a part thereof.

REP. It will be remembered that at the outset of Uncle Job's undertaking, Parson Brownwell had promised him his good will and assistance in every effort to do good. Notwithstanding that, however, the parson had seemed to shun him ever since. Uncle Job had seen the parson on the street on several occasions, and had tried to get a chance to speak with him; but the parson always appeared to have very important business in the opposite direction, and so they had never had a word of conversation since the one related in the first chapter, until Saturday morning of this week, when they happened to meet face to face, before either was aware of it, in turning the corner of a block in opposite directions. The following conversation then occurred:

SAWYER (*extending his hand and smiling*). Good morning, Brother Brownwell, I am very glad to meet you.

PARSON (*taking Uncle Job's hand, with very serious face*). Good morning, Mr. Sawyer. You will have to excuse me from much talk just now, for I am in a very great hurry.

SAWYER (*still smiling*). I have observed that you have always been in a great hurry every time I have seen you since our first conversation. What does it mean? Don't you mean to keep your pledge, then

made, to do all you could to help me in every good work?

PARSON (*still serious*). I am not yet convinced that your work is good.

SAWYER (*now serious*). But if your will was good, you could, at least, have joined with me in burying the dead. I was really amazed at your refusal to do that.

PARSON. There are reasons for that which I am not at liberty to state at present; but I will say, however, that I can hardly fellowship a man who criticises Christ's Golden Rule, to say nothing of several other things you had said and done which I consider highly improper, if not absolutely wicked.

SAWYER. In my view of things, Christ was only a man like other men, and I can see no more reason why a rule made by him should be above criticism than why one made by you should be so. I am, therefore, compelled to believe that the reasons you decline to give, were your real reasons. But tell me this in confidence, did not Badsinner and his gang put a veto on your free action?

PARSON (*pulling away*). You really must excuse me. I said I was in a hurry.

SAWYER (*following*). One word more. Are you aware of the fact that all the bad elements in all the orthodox churches in this village have formed a combination with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the Church of Practical Religion in whatever way they can, foul or fair? Do you know that Badsinner is the leader of this combination?

PARSON. Please do not feel offended with me. I assure you that I will do you no intentional wrong,

and I hope a time may come when I can talk with you frankly, and explain some things which require explanation, but for the present I must hold my tongue. Good morning, sir.

SAWYER. Good-morning. I am glad you have said even that.

REP. It may be briefly stated right here that, although the combination hinted at by Uncle Job, was then rather guessed at than *known*, yet it soon became well understood in certain well-informed circles that it was no myth. One part of their plan (which had been well carried out) was to bribe the three horse-jockeys, political tricksters, and orthodox church-members, who managed the three newspapers in Pinville, to preserve a dead silence, in their respective papers, in reference to Uncle Job's new movement Uncle Job cared nothing for all this. He said he expected to have to fight the devil at every step, and was ready to do so; but he didn't want the devil to get behind a barricade of orthodoxy, so that every blow struck at him should seem to be struck at orthodoxy. This was what he wanted to say to the parson, but the opportunity was denied him.

To the parson's credit be it said that it finally became known that, at the outset, he boldly opposed the combination. He told them flatly that they could win no victories with unholy weapons; that, in the way they were proposing to go to work, instead of destroying the new church, they would be more likely to pull the timbers of the old ones about their own ears. The combination then threatened to prefer formal charges of licentiousness against the

parson if he would not acquiesce in their proposed work. He was, no doubt, entirely innocent of this threatened charge; but he knew the power and the meanness of the combination, and feeling that resistance on his part would be his own utter ruin, he weakly gave way; and afterwards, as Uncle Job expressed it, "he played second fiddle to the devil."

CHAPTER X.

TESTING THE TRY-SQUARE RULE—THE TEN COMMANDMENTS—BADSINNER BAFFLED—HISTORICAL.

SUNDAY, 3 o'clock P.M. Benson's Hall full. The usual music discoursed.

SAWYER. I have received a rather larger number of communications to-day than seems desirable for one occasion, and I shall have to answer such of them as I can conveniently to-day, and save over the balance for future consideration.

One person writes as follows: "I thank you a thousand times for your 'try-square.' It helps me out where nothing else ever filled the bill. Several worthless fellows have been in the habit of asking me to lend them small sums of money which they never intend to pay, and which will do them no good if I let them have it. Before I heard of the try-square rule, I sometimes lied to them by telling them that I had no money with me, or that I had no change; but as I could never feel quite right in doing so, I more often yielded to their requests, and was bled by them quite freely in the course of the year, for I disliked to offend them by refusing. But now I blandly tell them that I have no money, and I feel that I am doing right instead of wrong."

I want to say to this friend that he should be careful not to lie where the truth would serve a better purpose. If a lie is transparent, it is worse than useless, and, besides that, a little plain talk to the class of people he mentions will often do them more good than the money they ask for. A plain duty of this kind should not be shirked simply because lying is easier.

I am asked, in another note, how I can justify, by the try-square, the killing of animals for food. I do not know that I can justify it, or *wish* to justify it. Nor do I know that it has ever been justified under any rule. If it can be justified at all, it must be done under the doctrine of *necessity;* for necessity, you know, like charity, covers a multitude of sins. It is only upon that doctrine that lying can be defended. God seems to have endowed all living beings—animals and insects, as well as man—with the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Who can say, with authority, that an ant, or a dog, has not an immortal soul? The old saying, "Of two evils choose the least," seems to come the nearest of anything I know of to affording a rule to justify killing of animals for food. By that rule it is held that I am justified in killing a man who attempts to kill me—provided I have no other alternative to save myself from great bodily harm. So, if several persons are cast away in a desert, or on the sea, without food, and under such circumstances that all must perish unless one is sacrificed and eaten by the others, I think the killing and eating of one or more by the others is justifiable beyond question. But if, under similar circumstances, animals could be found

and slain and eaten instead of men, of course that would be the lesser evil (if evil at all) and should be chosen. I can conceive of a time and circumstances wherein animals had so overcrowded the earth as to compel man to kill and eat them for his own sustenance as well as in self-defense. It may be that it was in this way that man acquired the taste and habit of flesh-eating. Quite probably, also, the practice called *cannibalism*, wherever it has existed, had its origin in a similar way. But, as to cannibalism, civilized men agree that the practice should cease with the necessity. Why does not the same reasoning condemn the eating of all flesh, except in an emergency to save human life? I confess I can not see why it does not. I am sure that very few of us would eat animal food if each was obliged to do his own killing. Let one imagine himself killing an inoffensive lamb for food—or, still better, let him actually undertake the job, and see how he feels.

> "Pleased to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
> And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood."

I must leave this question without a decisive answer. What I have said has not been intended for argument for or against, but only oral thinking. Each must follow the dictates of his own conscience until an enlightened public sentiment shall have settled the question.

One correspondent says there are several of the Ten Commandments that may be broken without violating the try-square. If that is true, then it will go hard with the Commandments. Such commandments will have to be abolished. Let us see how this is.

My friend specifies the two commandments relating to idolatry, the one forbidding the taking of God's name in vain, and the one enjoining the keeping of the Sabbath, etc.

Let us begin with the first Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Every system of religion ever proclaimed anywhere on earth has had a similar commandment, expressed or implied; but, of course, it is entitled to respect and obedience only when it emanates from the true God. No one can fail to see that, while it might not injure or offend the true God to have mankind set up false gods (either graven images or purely imaginary ones), yet such a thing would greatly degrade and injure all who participated in it, and it would be extremely wicked to knowingly instruct the young and ignorant that the false gods are other than what they are. So we find that the try-square, which condemns everything wrong, is not in conflict with the first and second of the Ten Commandments.

As to the taking of God's name in vain, there may be differences of opinion as to the nature and degree of that offense. For my own part, while I condemn the practice, yet I do not believe it injures, offends, or affects God any more than it would to shoot a potato popgun into the air. I have known men, while in a whirlwind of righteous wrath, to use God's name, by way of emphasis, with tremendous effect; and in such cases, where the occasion seemed to require extraordinary strength of expression, I have not been able to condemn it, but rather to approve it. It did not seem profane under such circumstances; nor did the name appear to have been used in vain,

In my opinion, Washington's swearing at Lee at Monmouth (which some historians have tried to cover up) was not wicked or profane, but *pious*. But, on the other hand, we have all known persons who make use of God's name at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of every short sentence they utter. This is offensive to every ear that hears it; and, besides, I regard it as a very vulgar habit—a great blemish in the possessor of it. Such use of strong language in ordinary affairs, instead of adding emphasis, detracts from the force, dignity, grace, and lucidity of speech. We see, then, that the try-square, so far as essentials are concerned, tallies with the third Commandment.

How are we required to keep the Sabbath? I think any use of that day that will not violate the try-square will be a proper use of it. It must be remembered that the Commandments, like all the rest of the Bible, were made by men. They thought they had discovered certain truths, and their saying that God said so and so was only an emphatic form of saying that the things were true; for all truth is God's truth. It had probably been discovered by experience, long before the age of Moses, that an occasional day of rest from one's daily avocation was needed to recuperate the system for another season of toil. The legend existed that God had labored six days in creating the universe, and had rested the seventh. Doubtless it was in analogy with this legend that one day in seven was set apart for man's recreation, and such use of the day for thousands of years has satisfied mankind that it is proper and needful, and has proved the wisdom of those ancient

law-makers who ordained it. But we ought to be sure that we make no mistake as to the proper manner of observing the day. The gist of the commandment is that we rest from all labor, and this is not intended as a religious rite, but for our physical health and re-invigoration. That part of the commandment which says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," means simply to remember and keep it sacred as a day of rest and recreation. There is nothing in the commandment, nor anywhere in the Bible, which requires us to go to church on that day, or to read the Bible, or to maintain a studied solemnity, or to do any one of the hundred other things that some really good people deem essential to a proper observance of the day. As I just said, the essence of the command is that we sacredly devote the day to rest from our regular pursuits, and to the gaining of strength for new labor. But this does not imply that all of us must do precisely alike on Sunday (for Sunday has now come to be universally recognized as the Sabbath). We are to *rest*, to recuperate, to recreate, and thus prepare ourselves for renewed exertion at our usual occupations. A moment's reflection will satisfy anybody that what would be rest for one person might be the very opposite of rest to another. For instance, a farmer who has taxed every muscle of his body to the utmost for six days, will naturally desire to lounge about on the Sabbath, and read, and possibly do some writing, and visit with his friends; while, on the other hand, a lawyer who has passed the week sitting in his office, reading, writing, and studying, and has had far too little time to get necessary physical exercise,

will feel it to be a great punishment to be compelled to continue in a similar course during the Sabbath. It would be rest to him to go into the field and spend at least a portion of the Sabbath as the farmer spent his six days. Now, it is the province of the try-square to so regulate the conduct of these two men that neither of them shall be injured, but rather that both shall be benefited by the command to rest on the seventh day. When the fourth commandment is properly understood, it will not be found in conflict withthe try-square. In short, the try-square is a sort of latter-day *labor-saver*, readily supplying the place of hundreds of special rules and commandments.

REP. At this juncture, three or four sharp cries of "Fire!" in different parts of the room followed one another in quick succession, and in one minute the hall was cleared, with the exception of Uncle Job and some fifteen or twenty other men too cool to be driven into a panic. It was a false alarm, and Uncle Job would have been furious had it not been for that superb self-command which made him greater than he who taketh a city. Three ladies were severely injured in the panic, and had to be assisted to their homes. In the course of ten minutes about two-thirds of the audience had returned to the hall, and order being restored—

SAWYER. I am sublimely confident that this disturbance was produced by a damnable conspiracy, instigated by the devil and executed by his imps, for the purpose not only of disturbing our meeting, but of breaking down and destroying our Church. If the person who started the alarm of fire here will tell

who hired him to do it, and swear to it in court when required, I will give him one hundred dollars and promise not to prosecute him for his offense.

REP. The sequel may as well be told right here. Before night, the same day, three men came forward separately, and stated that they had made the cry of fire, that they had been employed to do so by Mr. Badsinner, and each claimed the hundred dollars. Uncle Job told them to keep quiet for the present, and that the reward could not be paid until their testimony had been given in court. Mr. Badsinner soon learned that he had been exposed, and began boasting among his associates that the only law that could come anywhere near reaching him was the one against disturbing religious meetings, and that there was no magistrate in the county, excepting Uncle Job (and he was disqualified on account of his interest), who would hold that the assembly disturbed was a religious meeting. Before this boasting had gone on many days, the three ladies who had been injured commenced suits against him, by George B. Gibson, their attorney, claiming five thousand dollars damage in each case. This proceeding decidedly turned the joke to the other side, although Mr. Badsinner continued to boast and bluster for several weeks; but at length, as the time for trial approached, some of his friends (probably his co-conspirators) came around and wanted to hush the matter up by some sort of compromise, and finally they were allowed to effect a settlement by paying eight hundred dollars to one plaintiff, five hundred to another, and three hundred to the third. Since then Uncle Job's meetings have not been dis-

turbed by false alarms of fire, and the combination have been quite cautious about treading on dangerous ground. Several other annoyances, like putting pepper on the stove, were attempted from time to time, but without much effect. It should be added that a large majority of the respectable portion of the orthodox churches heartily disapproved and condemned the dishonorable course of the conspirators. Several members of the orthodox churches actually made application for membership in the new church who probably would not have done so had it not been for the villainous conduct of the combination. One of them said he thought Uncle Job's church must be a good thing, because Badsinner and his gang were so dreadfully down on it, for he never knew them to oppose anything bad.

The full reward of one hundred dollars was paid to each of the hirelings who confessed. This was not done because it was believed they were legally entitled to so much, but because it was deemed best to deal liberally with them, thus setting an example which might assist in procuring other confessions in the future. The whole amount was paid by the three ladies who had recovered damages, as they would not allow Uncle Job to pay anything.

SAWYER (*continuing*). I had marked some passages of English history, which I intended to read here to-day, interlarded with such remarks of my own as should seem to be appropriate at the time; but since the audience has been disturbed, and partly dispersed, I will not go through the programme I had marked out, but will let it suffice to read two or three odd extracts.

In the beginning let me say that the history of England is the ancient history of our own people, just as the Old Testament is supposed to be the ancient history of the Jews, with the difference that the history of England has far less of fiction in it than the other; and it is just as important, in my judgment, that we should be familiar with our own ancient history as that we should read the Old Testament. We of this generation do not know until we read it in the history (and even then we can not realize it) that every liberty which we enjoy as a birthright, was plucked and wrenched by the strong arms of our ancestors from between the clenched teeth of crowned and sceptered tyrants, who claimed to hold power by divine right. It has been truly and grandly said that "the road to liberty is paved with the bones and watered with the blood of millions." But all crowned heads have not been tyrants, and I want to read you a speech which Queen Elizabeth, who was greatly loved by her people, delivered to her soldiers during a great crisis in our history, nearly three hundred years ago. The King of Spain and the Prince of Parma were preparing to invade England with their joint forces, which were to be conveyed thence by means of great fleets, called an armada, and they fully expected to overwhelm and subjugate the English people. There was great excitement throughout England, and all the people were ready to do their utmost to repel the threatened invasion. The queen herself was thoroughly aroused, and took the field in person, mingling freely with her troops and encamping with them. It was in this hour of extreme peril, when

every nerve in England was strained to its highest tension, that the queen made the address I have mentioned. I have read it at least fifty times, and every time its burning words draw tears in spite of me. It is one of the brightest gems I know of in literature, and it should have a place in our school-books. I will now try to read it to you:

"My loving people! we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you, I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear! I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of battle, to live or die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honor and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England, too, and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm! To which, rather than any dishonor shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns, and we do assure you, on the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the mean time, my lieutenant-general shall

be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valor in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people."

REP. Uncle Job made some further remarks, giving a brief outline of the struggles with King John over Magna Charta, etc., and also stating something about the civil war, which resulted in the execution of Charles I., and he promised at no distant day to give a more extended lecture with readings on both of these subjects, as well as others of a kindred nature.

CHAPTER XI.

A POLITICAL EPISODE—THE PREACHERS SERVE SATAN—TRIUMPH OF UNCLE JOB.

REP. I find that I must condense more, or I shall have a larger volume than I contemplated, and I shall therefore try to make this and the next succeeding chapter bridge over a period of several months, during which time the general routine continued about the same as it has been outlined in the previous chapters.

At the annual town meeting in April, a successor had to be elected to Uncle Job in the office of justice of the peace. As has been before stated, Uncle Job had been re-elected to the office again and again with no serious opposition; but now Mr. Badsinner was determined to compass his defeat if possible. Uncle Job did not desire the office, but, like most human beings, he did not wish to be *driven* out of it, and yet he felt it to be beneath his dignity to make any effort to secure his election. He therefore simply said nothing and did nothing. At the Republican caucus the policy of renominating Uncle Job was seriously discussed, not in public, but in private talks between the party leaders. It was known that Mr. Badsinner would spend a considerable sum of

money in buying votes, and in every other corrupt way that would be likely to produce the end he had in view, and it was likewise known that Uncle Job would do no such thing, and it was believed that the number of mercenary voters in the town was sufficient to turn the scale if money enough was used to buy them all up. Some thought it best not to nominate a man who would provoke bitter opposition, but the majority said they believed the best way to do away with political corruption was to let it come all from one side, and in so strong doses as to make the decent people of all parties sick and disgusted. They argued that, while in that way they might lose two or three elections, yet sooner or later the sheep would separate themselves from the goats, and that, when that was accomplished, virtue would triumph. The result was that Uncle Job was nominated. The next day the Democrats held their caucus, and Mr. Badsinner was full of religious zeal. The nomination for justice was offered in turn to two men of prominence and good repute, but both declined. Then Mr. Badsinner took the floor, and with great warmth said that it was a disgrace to the town to allow a judicial office to be held by a hoary-headed old Infidel; that he, as a Christian man, had determined to do what little he could to inaugurate a reform in this respect, and that, if no one else would take the nomination, he was willing to do so himself, and stand in the breach alone, fighting the battle single-handed if need be. He was then nominated. This was Saturday afternoon, and the town meeting was to take place on the following Tuesday. Mr. Badsinner at once hired about a dozen men who never

had any reputation for goodness, to go about the town telling what an awful old sinner Job Sawyer was, and what a great shame it would be to elect him to so honorable an office as justice of the peace over a pure Christian gentleman like Mr. Badsinner. He also went to every place in town where strong drink was sold, and left five dollars at each place, with directions to "treat the boys" as long as the money lasted. He next went, the same night, to see each of the orthodox ministers, to endeavor to induce them to mention the subject in their religious services next day. What took place between him and the several ministers was not publicly known at the time, but enough has leaked out since so that the following may be stated as the substance of it: Mr. Brownwell, of the M. E. Church, begged to be excused, saying that it had been generally understood as a fixed principle in this country that politics and religion should be kept separate, and, over and above all, that he thought it would be a degradation of the cause of Christ for one of his ministers to enter into an unseemly scramble over a local secular office of no great importance. Mr. Badsinner bluntly told the parson that he must, in some effective way, put his shoulder to the wheel, or make immediate preparation to leave his charge in disgrace. After some reflection the parson promised to call personally, on Monday, upon each of the Republican members of his flock, and endeavor to prove to them that they owed it as their duty to God and to the Church of Christ to vote for professed Christians in preference to men who not only denied the divinity of Christ, but doubted the exist-

ence of God and the immortality of the soul. This promise he kept. The Congregational minister also had doubts at first about the propriety of complying with Mr. Badsinner's request, but a subscription of ten dollars to his salary quickened his religious ardor so much that at the Sunday evening service he stated to his congregation that on Tuesday next an important office was to be filled by their votes; that the choice was narrowed down to two men, one of whom was a member of a Christian church in good standing, and the other was a member of no church, was an avowed Freethinker, and was endeavoring, though in a feeble way, to overthrow the cause of Christ; and that all professed Christians had a duty to perform which needed no words from him to point out.

The Baptist minister was quite intractable until Mr. Badsinner called to his aid two or three prominent Democratic members of the Baptist church. It seems there was at the time a sharp division and controversy in the church, growing out of some question of discipline, and that the pastor had espoused what was likely to prove the weaker side, while the aforesaid Democratic members belonged with the other side. These members, by promising to join their pastor in the church controversy, induced him to undertake a similar task to the one above described as undertaken by the Methodist minister. It has not been learned whether any effort was made by Mr. Badsinner with the Unitarian minister or the Catholic priest.

On Monday, a committee of several of Uncle Job's friends (some of them members of orthodox churches)

called on him and urged him with great persistency to do something to counteract Mr. Badsinner's work. They said it would be a calamity as well as disgrace to permit so notorious a villain as Mr. Badsinner to hold so honorable an office as that of magistrate, and several of the committee, and especially the orthodox members, advocated the use of money, arguing that it was often necessary to fight the devil with the devil's own tools. Uncle Job said that the use of money in elections was wrong as a matter of principle; that it was condemned by the try-square, and also by the law of the land; that, so far as fighting the devil with his own weapons was concerned, he thought that course could only be justified in very extreme cases—where life, or some similar peril, was involved; "and beyond all that," said he, "there is the 'iron-clad oath' that the successful candidate must take—does anybody suppose that I would pay out money to buy votes, and then go before God Almighty and swear that I haven't done it?" This last was said with much feeling and considerable emphasis. The orthodox members of the committee said they thought this was one of the cases in which the end would justify the means, and that God would forgive whatever was wrong in it for that reason, even to the taking of the "iron-clad oath." Uncle Job said he was aware that some people looked at it in that way, but he did not. He felt sure that *his* God would never forgive *him* if he should do such a thing; but even if he could feel assured of God's mercy, he could never forgive himself, and he cared more for his own self-respect than for all else, present or future.

It was then proposed by one of the committee that

a fund be raised by subscription among the committee and such other members of the party as felt disposed to contribute, and used where it would have most effect in defeating the corrupt work of Mr. Badsinner. Uncle Job said that he felt the keenest sense of thankfulness for the kindly sentiments they had expressed towards himself, and that the motives which prompted them to make the last proposition were deserving of the highest praise; but yet that he could not consent to the proposition. One then suggested that it be done without his consent. To this suggestion Uncle Job said, with great earnestness, that if any member of *his* church contributed to a corruption fund, or in any way assisted in its use, he (Uncle Job) would do all in his power to have him expelled from the church. At this, the committee were in despair for some minutes. At last one of the committee said, with considerable spirit: "Men and brethren, it will never do to let this matter go by default. I move that we go forth, with such other good citizens as we can induce to join us, and work with all our might, and with every lawful means in our power, from this hour until the closing of the polls to-morrow night, for the defeat of Mr. Badsinner." The motion was unanimously carried, Uncle Job pronounced a fervent "amen," and the meeting adjourned.

I will state here, what the reader has quite likely suspected already, that by this time I had become one of Uncle Job's willing and devoted disciples; not that I swallowed all of his notions without qualification, but because of his sturdy honesty and sincerity, his great originality and apparent independence

of all previous thinkers in the same veins of thought; and, withal, the man was lovable by reason of his possessing, in a high degree, that indescribable quality sometimes called personal magnetism, though he was absolutely free from all the arts that so frequently accompany, and often mar, that quality in others. Though I was a comparative stranger in the town, I joined heartily in the work of trying to save Uncle Job from defeat. To make a long story short, about thirty of the best people of Pinville and the adjacent rural neighborhood (some of them Democrats, some of them closing their places of business, and many of them men who had never previously done anything more in a political contest than to vote) now went about industriously among their neighbors and acquaintances, arguing earnestly the question of fitness of the respective candidates for justice. It was found that the work attempted by the orthodox clergy had, in many cases, had an effect directly contrary to that intended, some of the men approached openly denouncing their pastors, and insinuating that they must have been bribed. There were, however, a few pin-headed persons who appeared to sincerely believe that the election of Uncle Job would seriously threaten the Christian church with destruction, and with them argument was wasted. They would meet every new form of stating the case with the allegation that *any* man who believed the Bible was better than any man who did not, or something of that kind, in substance.

Towards night, on Monday, it was learned that Mr. Badsinner had engaged a private room within fifty feet of the polling-place, and was stocking it with a

large quantity of intoxicating liquors for use the next day. On learning this fact, a few of the committee of citizens before mentioned again held a short conference at Uncle Job's house. Uncle Job read them the law, and then said that, while he would not expend one cent to be used unlawfully, yet he would place two hundred dollars in their hands to be used in the detection of crime and the punishment of criminals. Instantly one of the committee seized a pencil and paper and wrote the following:

"$200 REWARD $200.

"WHEREAS, It is a crime to sell or give away any intoxicating liquor, as a beverage, within eighty rods of the place where any town meeting is held, during the day of such town meeting, from midnight to midnight; and

"WHEREAS, It is a crime to give, or promise to give, any money, or other valuable thing, to influence the giving or withholding of a vote at any town meeting; and

"WHEREAS, Both of these wholesome laws are threatened with violation at the town meeting to be held at Benson's Hall in the village of Pinville to-morrow:

"Now, therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Pinville and vicinity, hereby promise to pay the sum of two hundred dollars as a reward, or rewards, for the detection and exposure of such crimes (if any such shall be committed) and the punishment of the criminals—said rewards to be distributed by an impartial person, so that the share of each recipient shall be proportionate to his merits. We also pledge ourselves to render to every informer seeking the above reward, or any portion thereof, every reasonable assistance in our power to earn said reward by the due and prompt conviction of the offenders."

Then follow the date, and the names of twenty-one prominent citizens. It was promptly printed in the shape of hand-bills, in bold type, well displayed, and

five hundred copies were circulated and posted all over town before nine o'clock Monday night.

Hard work was done next day, and close watch was kept of the movements of Mr. Badsinner's gang, in order to reduce the effectiveness of their work to the minimum. Mr. Badsinner's hirelings (most of them drunk) were earning their wages by howling profane maledictions against Uncle Job. One half-witted cripple, who had no use whatever of his legs from his body down, but had perfect use of his lungs, sat all day on the floor within a few feet of the ballot-box, and, with head thrown back and chest well expanded (reminding one of a huge bullfrog), he shouted every few minutes something about like this: "Job Sawyer's an Atheist; he's a Deist; he's an Infidel; he's a Freethinker; he don't believe the Bible; he don't believe in nothun'," and this, with very little variation, he repeated, without any apparent lack of wind, until the closing of the polls. Nobody paid any more attention to him than though he had been a good-natured dog; but that didn't seem to annoy him any. When the day was done he said, with a chuckle, that he had got two dollars for his day's work.

Uncle Job received forty-eight majority, which was about twenty ahead of the average Republican majority on the balance of the ticket; but, on justice, party lines had been entirely ignored.

CHAPTER XII.

RANDOM JOTS.

REP. This chapter will have to be a sort of hotch potch without much attempt at order or sequence.

At one of the business meetings of the church, Uncle Job said, addressing himself to the teachers of the Sunday-school:

SAWYER. I want to impress upon the mind of every teacher of young people the great duty resting upon him to teach children and youth how to become honorable and useful men and women. This can not be done successfully by talking only in a general way, but the teacher should endeavor to reach the mind of the pupil by directing his attention to special cases for illustration. Children have as much pride as grown folks. Try to take advantage of that fact by making them proud to be square, frank, and honest in all things. You can hardly find any human being so low or hardened as to be devoid of all sense of honor. To be sure, it is often that kind of honor that is said to exist among thieves; but you will find that the person possessing it takes great pride in it, and would scorn to do what, to his mind, would be a dishonorable act, while he would do other acts without the least compunction, which, to your mind,

are highly reprehensible or even criminal. I can not help believing that this state of mind is largely due to the man's education, or lack of it. It must be that if a person, such as I have supposed, had been properly trained, while young, to know what behavior an enlightened public opinion would consider dishonorable, those sparks of honor and pride which we find not yet quite dead in him would have been broadened and deepened and heightened until they would have embraced the whole range of his mind and conduct. There is always a stage in the life of a young person, when his instructors and associations have everything to do with his future career, and therefore in these days, where so many associations are more or less corrupt, it is especially important that the instructors shall do their duty with the greatest thoroughness. Speaking of associations leads me to illustrate a little. I have actually found young men who have become so accustomed to seeing votes bought and sold on election day, and hearing it talked about in a matter-of-fact way, that they are astounded when told that such things are unlawful or improper. They ought to have been taught in childhood to despise both the buyer and the seller, and to so highly prize their birthright of freedom for its own sake, and for the sake of their ancestors who fought, bled, and died to procure it for them, that they can never be induced to barter it away for any price whatever.

We are accustomed to speak of *conscience* as a safe guide when its dictates are obeyed, and this is true of a well-trained conscience, but not otherwise. Conscience, in its broad sense, means knowledge, and

knowledge is a matter that does not come to us by intuition, but it must be acquired by study, observation, or instruction. Take a man, for instance, who has had no other schooling than that acquired by being born and reared in a modern American "saloon." He may have the best of material to make a good man of, but his conscience would not lead him to the same conclusions on many points, as it would if he had been brought up in a better school. Again, a conscience which was once intuitively right may have become so dulled and deadened by disuse (being constantly ignored or overruled) as to cease altogether to prod its possessor at the critical moment, and thus save him from transgression. On the other hand, conscience will become more highly developed, more acute and sensitive, by a careful watching of, and obedience to, its dictates. A well-educated conscience is as sensitive as the magnetic needle, and, like the needle, in seeking for its indications in any particular case, great care must be exercised to guard it against foreign influences. You know that the needle will tell the truth only when left entirely free; and it is very much so with the conscience. When you seek its guidance, strive not to influence its indications by your wishes, your hopes, or your fears, and you will seldom be misled. But if you continually try to make your conscience dictate what your selfishness desires, it will soon lose all power to guide you at all, but will itself be guided by your selfishness, and such a conscience as that is a dangerous thing to have. Its possessor may commit murder without compunction. These facts should be pondered by old as well as young people, and the

young should especially be taught that they have planted within them a faculty which by right use will guide them surely through paths of righteousness, but which, by neglect or misuse, will allow its owner to be destroyed without raising a warning voice against the danger.

REP. One day I was walking on the street by the side of Uncle Job, and observing that every few minutes he raised his hat for a moment or two, I finally said: Mr. Sawyer, I have noticed on several occasions that you have a habit of frequently lifting your hat without any apparent reason; will you please to explain why you do it?

SAWYER. You have noticed, also, that I am not in the least degree bald. Well, I have preserved my hair by the habit you inquire about. The fact is that God gave us a natural covering for the head which, with most people, would be ample for all purposes if they would be content with it; but fashion decrees, not only that the head shall be covered, but what the covering shall be. You possibly think me no slave of fashion; but I assure you that if it were not for the fashion I should wear no hat or cap at any season of the year.

A man becomes bald by the operation of a natural law. Snakes are said to have formerly had legs; but the snake, for some reason, abandoned the use of his legs, and so, by operation of law, they withered and disappeared. You seldom see a man bald below the line covered by his hat; but you have seen thousands whose heads, above that point, are as bare as their foreheads. There can be no doubt that this

result was caused by habitually wearing heavy, air-tight hats or caps. This view is strengthened by the fact that women (whose head-gear, though sometimes outrageous in form, is not so heavy or tight, or worn so much of the time, as that of men) are seldom bald. You call my lifting of the hat a *habit*. In one sense it is not a habit, but a necessity. I have never compelled my head to become accustomed to the heat produced by the long wearing of a hat, and therefore, when the heat under my hat rises to a certain point, my head informs me that it is time to let in the air. In the coldest day in winter, if I am exercising, I have to lift an ordinary felt hat at least six times every hour. After a man has lost his hair, it will be too late to try to go without a hat, for he will then need something as a substitute for what he has lost; but young men, by proper care, can preserve their hair, or most of it, until old age, unless baldness has already become hereditary with them. I have seen men ride all day in a hot railroad car without once lifting their heavy hats. I never wear a hat long at a time within-doors—not even on a railroad train. I can sometimes endure it for a short time by cocking it back on my head, or by turning it at an angle so that the air will circulate round my head. If a covering must be worn on the head (and I suppose it must, or be deemed outlandish), it ought to be made so as not to injure the wearer. I have often thought that, if I had access to a hat-maker, I would have a hat made to order that would admit the air freely without the lifting you have noticed. I would willingly give two prices for such a hat if I could get one.

All hats ought either to be made of porous stuff, or else holes should be made in them for ventilation. One hole will not be enough, but there should be at least two—one on each side, or one in front and one in rear—so as to permit a draft of air; and it would be very handy indeed if slides were so arranged that the holes could be widened or narrowed to suit the weather, or the whim of the wearer.

REP. On another occasion, I was complaining, in Uncle Job's hearing, of a terrible canker-sore in my mouth. He said he knew of only one thing that would cure it. I said he was infinitely ahead of me, for I knew of nothing that would do it any good, although I had tried almost everything. He told me to try spirits of camphor, and that he thought two or three applications, from six to ten hours apart, would drive it away. He said the solution should be as strong of camphor as possible—stronger than usually made by the druggists—in order to obtain the best results. He also gave minute directions for the application, to wit: First dry the affected part with a dry cloth, and keep it free from moisture during the treatment (about one minute). Apply the liquid with a stick or straw, one drop at a time, until four or five drops have been applied. Hold still until the liquor evaporates; then let go, and you will forget all about your canker until it is time to give it another dose.

I tried the remedy at once, and have had occasion to do so two or three times since, and I consider it a sure cure. No person who has ever suffered from these vicious little sores will blame me for this ob-

trusion—certainly not after he has tried the remedy. One Sunday afternoon, in the prelude to the regular sermon, the following occurred:

SAWYER. One of the teachers in the Sunday-school drops me a note asking what he is to teach the children as to who made them. I see no need of changing the orthodox catechism in that regard. God made us all—"the world and all that therein is;" but as soon as a child is old enough to understand the matter, he should be instructed in the true nature and attributes of God, in so far as we feel sure that we know them, and matters of doubt may well be left until the child becomes able to reason for himself.

I have a suspicion that the interrogator in this case had doubts in his own mind whether he ought not to instruct the child that he was made by his earthly parents. I think this unnecessary and hardly proper for young children; but I am well convinced that no child of either sex should be allowed to progress far into its teens without being thoroughly instructed, by competent teachers, in all that pertains to the reproduction of the human species. The way the young are obliged to get their knowledge of these very important matters at the present day is a shame to civilization.

At another time, in a business meeting, Uncle Job said: I wish we could have a department of our Sunday-school where girls (and boys too, if they wish) could be taught, in a practical way, all the essentials of housekeeping. I suppose it cannot be done very conveniently; but, at all events, I hope no girl will

grow up in this church without being made to realize that no accomplishment gives so much grace and dignity to a woman as a thorough, practical knowledge of the arts of housekeeping, including kitchen and laundry work. Other accomplishments are desirable; but the possessor of all others combined, if she lack this one, will be like the house built on the sand. I could never understand why so many people regard housework as degrading. I have known quite intelligent young women who seemed to feel ashamed to admit that they ever did any work, even in their own homes; and I have seen other silly creatures who proclaimed with seeming pride that they did not know how to do any kind of domestic work. I always feel sorry for such people.

About the only thing that I feel proud of is my ability to go into the kitchen, when necessity requires, as it sometimes does, and prepare a meal without asking any odds of anybody. We read that Daniel Webster was an expert in the cooking of shad, and that he once had a contest with an old darkey, who was expert in the same line, each being judge of the other's cooking. General Scott, too, is said to have given instructions to numerous hotel cooks. It is nowhere mentioned that either Webster or Scott was ashamed of his knowledge of the art of cookery. A girl eighteen years old, with natural faculties, who can not, in case of necessity, run a house with her own hands, ought to be ashamed of herself; and her parents should also be ashamed of themselves for allowing their child to grow up in such gross ignorance.

In another prelude:

SAWYER. A correspondent reminds me that I sometimes make use of the word *devil*, and asks what I mean by it. I mean the concentrated quintessence of evil, and I have doubts whether the originator of the word meant anything different from that. Of course, I don't believe there is, or ever was, any personal devil, and I don't want anybody to understand that I do; but our language is largely composed of idioms, and saint and sinner alike must use the idioms in order to be understood. When the ancients separated all things into two great classes, good things and evil things, they next sought two nouns, one of which should comprehend and represent in a single word the great whole of each class, and thus the adjective *good* was changed to the noun *God*, and the adjective *evil* was changed to the noun *Devil*. In process of time the ignorance, superstition, and imagination of the people by degrees invested those nouns with a very different meaning from what was first intended by them.

Another correspondent, or probably the same one, though in a separate note, asks why I use the term *Supreme Being* when I do not believe in a personal God. Perhaps what I have just said may in part answer this query; but I will add further that in its primary sense, and when first coined, the word *being* was a participle of the passive verb *to be*, and meant exactly the same as the word *existing*. Again, the word *supreme* means *highest*. Now, if we elevate the participle *existing* into a noun, and create the expression *Highest Existing*, we have an exact equivalent for the term *Supreme Being*, and either of those terms

satisfies, and is satisfied by, my idea of God as I have heretofore endeavored to define it. I do not believe that the man who first used the term *Supreme Being* had any more belief in a personal God than I have.

Another asks if I recommend the entire disuse of the Bible. By no means. I advise everybody to read it, at least once, from A to Izzard, and I assure them that they will find hundreds, yes, thousands, of things in it to admire, and that are as true as they are beautiful. But when you read about animals with seven heads and ten horns, or that the sun stood still in the heavens at the command of a man, or other extravagances, I don't ask you to believe a word of it. I do not advise people to read the whole Bible because I believe it all to be good, but because there is no other way to find the gems that are scattered all through it. There was a time when the scriptures that now constitute the Bible were fragments which, with many other similar writings, were owned or held by different men in different places. Finally great councils of bishops and other clergy were held, in which the writings were carefully examined, and those that were deemed worth saving were put together to make up the Bible, while the others were scattered and lost. There can be no doubt that if the work of compilation had been postponed until the present age, the Bible would have been a very different book from what it is. I think it would be an excellent thing to hold another council of wise and liberal-minded men to revise the Bible. At least one half of it could profitably be expunged, and replaced with the writings of men not

born nor prophesied of when the former compilation was made.

REP. One day several men were conversing in a social way in Uncle Job's office (a room in his house), when some one happening to make use of the expression "*petered out,*" another asked what it meant. After several opinions had been rendered, Uncle Job was appealed to for his judgment.

SAWYER. I have often observed that the expression is supposed by many people to be quite vulgar, if not obscene, and I see that some of you have the same notion; but I think quite otherwise. There is no doubt in my mind that the expression was originally intended to typify the cowardly conduct of Peter in denying Christ. You remember Peter talked bravely, and boasted, "Though I should die with thee, yet I will not deny thee," and yet that same night, as the story goes, he denied him thrice before the cock crew. In this view the word *Petered* is full of meaning, and I think it should be spelled with a capital P, and the first *e* should not be doubled, as is sometimes done.

During the same conversation one of the party made reference to Uncle Job as a Freethinker, whereupon —

SAWYER. While I am proud to believe that my thoughts are absolutely free and untrammeled, yet I do not know that I should be altogether fellowshipped by the sect styling themselves Freethinkers. I have had opportunity to become acquainted with only a few of them, and for the most part I have

found them very earnest, upright, unselfish, and good people; but it has sometimes seemed to me that they have become about as sectarian and dogmatic in their way as the orthodox religionists are in their way. I am very sorry to feel that this is so, for, if true, it cannot fail to narrow their field of work, and hence diminish their ability to do good. I believe they have done, and are doing, great good in the world; but I think they might do still greater good by modifying their methods, not to say manners, somewhat. Perhaps it will illustrate my meaning to say that unwelcome truth, like unpleasant medicine, may be rendered palatable by coating it with sugar. I prefer, under all the circumstances, to be called an *independent* thinker instead of a Freethinker. What the world needs to-day is not a new religion, nor a new sect of an old religion, but an *eclectic* religion—one that shall adopt all the good points and reject all the bad and worthless points in all the religions of the past and present, and such eclectic religion will not be bound round with iron hoops, but will be elastic enough to permit of the greatest freedom and diversity of honest thought and speech. One trouble with all the religions ever invented has been that men imagined true religion to be something far above and beyond them—something that they could only hope to attain to by a good deal of praying and by special act of divine providence. They seem to regard it as something having no connection with this life, and they take great pains to keep it separate from business affairs as much as possible. Most men feel ashamed to be found talking on religious subjects on a week day. Now this

should all be reversed. Religion is *natural*, and it should be *practical*. A man should never engage in any pursuit that will require him to leave his religion behind; but his religion should be his constant companion and guide, as well in business and pleasure as during what are called hours of worship. I am not now intending to deny that there may be supernal elements in religion, but I do say that it is folly to reject all other parts of religion, excepting the supernal, when we all know that not more than one in ten of the human family ever get even so much as a glimpse of the supernatural part. The Practical Religionist will not object if his neighbor has found a higher element in religion than himself has found, and much less should the possessor of a higher religion condemn or stigmatize the Practical Religionist who faithfully and honestly follows all the light that God has given him. The less favored one is not to blame for his lack of ability, and his more highly favored brother should extend a helping hand to him; and this can best be done in *one* church. When all fallacies are removed from religion, then all sects and denominations will disappear, and only one great, broad Church of Practical Religion will remain.

REP. I cannot close this chapter without giving a brief general description of the church work during the several months preceding the occurrences to be mentioned in the next following chapter.

Uncle Job made frequent references to his try-square, in season and out of season—in short, it seemed to have become a hobby with him for some weeks after he first introduced it; but after a while,

when the novelty of it had worn off, his references to it became less frequent. He preached every Sunday afternoon to a crowded house. His sermons were full of practical hints for old and young, male and female, and were interspersed with readings and quotations from the Bible, Shakspere, Milton, history, statute laws, etc. The Sunday evening meetings were held at irregular intervals, and generally the house was well filled. One Sunday night a traveling man exhibited his stereopticon views, with explanatory lecture, free of charge. At another meeting a practical machinist explained all the principles and *modus operandi* of the modern steam-engine, illustrating by means of a small-sized engine of his own manufacture, which was placed upon the platform and taken entirely to pieces for the purpose. At another time one of the townsmen, who had recently returned from a visit to South America, gave a description of what he had seen and learned. On still other occasions two young men of the congregation gave historical readings—or perhaps they should be called *lectures* interspersed with readings.

It is needless to say that the interest in the social entertainments never flagged.

The interest which all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children took in the Sunday-school was truly wonderful. There was a Shakspere class of thirty-four, which was conducted somewhat on the plan of an orthodox Bible class. Another class grappled with Milton's "Paradise Lost," but soon abandoned it for something easier. There were other classes, too numerous to mention—one in Roman history, another in English history, another in Amer-

ican history, and others still in the poetry of various authors. Some of the little ones were trying to commit to memory beautiful poems and extracts selected by their teachers. A class of nineteen boys and girls, from ten to thirteen years old, had become so proficient in reciting what they had thus learned that, one Sunday afternoon, Uncle Job had them recite in concert from his platform an exquisite poem as a prelude to his sermon. The piece so rendered was a great favorite of Uncle Job's, and for that reason, and because the poem is rarely met with in print, I think I shall be justified in reproducing it as an ending to this chapter.

WHAT I LIVE FOR.

BY G. L. BANKS.

I live for those who love me,
  For those I know are true,
For the heaven that smiles above me,
  And awaits my spirit, too;
For the human ties that bind me,
For the task by God assigned me,
For the bright hopes left behind me,
  And the good that I can do.

I live to learn their story,
  Who've suffered for my sake,
To emulate their glory,
  And follow in their wake—
Bards, martyrs, patriots, sages,
The noble of all ages,
Whose deeds crown history's pages,
  And Time's great volume make.

I live to hail the season,
  By gifted minds foretold,
When man shall rule by reason,

And not alone by gold—
When, man to man united,
And every wrong thing righted,
The whole world shall be lighted
As Eden was of old.

I live to hold communion
With all that is divine,
To feel there is a union
'Twixt nature's heart and mine;
To profit by affliction,
Reap truths from fields of fiction,
Grow wiser from conviction,
And fulfil each grand design.

I live for those who love me,
For those who know me true,
For the heaven that smiles above me,
And awaits my spirit, too;
For the wrong that needs resistance,
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUNDAY AND POLITICS—THE COUNTY CONVENTION—PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS—WIRE-PULLERS.

SUNDAY afternoon, after preliminary music—

SAWYER. A correspondent arraigns me for engaging in political discussion on the Lord's day. I have referred to political matters in no party spirit; but only to point out and condemn certain practices which are recognized by the whole civilized world to be evil, only evil, and that continually. If the pulpit is not a proper place from which to denounce the devil and his works, then I think the pulpit had better be kicked over and something new set up in its place; and if the Sabbath has become too sacred for anything but the singing of pointless hymns and the rehearsal of insipid rehash of things thousands of years old, then I say the Sabbath has outlived its usefulness, and ought to be reformed. For my part, I intend to fight the devil wherever I find him, and wherever and whenever I can do so most effectively; and if Sunday and the sacred desk, so-called, happen to be the most convenient time and place for my purposes, then on that day and in that place I will give him wager of battle.

I have been trying for some time to find some competent person who would give us a course of Sunday-evening lectures on astronomy, and also on geology; but down to the present time I have not succeeded. The principal of our high school has the ability to give us a large amount of information on both of those subjects, as well as much entertainment, and personally he seems willing to comply with my request; but he felt it to be his duty to decline unless the consent of the board of education was first obtained. So I made application to the board of education at a regular meeting, and the trustees all looked exceedingly wise, but said nothing of any consequence in my presence, until finally the president said to me that he would see me the next day, and inform me of the action of the board. I took this as a hint that they did not want to discuss the subject in my presence, and left. The next day the president told me that the board took no action. I persisted in thrusting the question upon them at every opportunity, until finally, at the end of nearly six weeks, I was informed that the board of education of the village of Pinville had come solemnly to the conclusion, after mature deliberation, that it would be prejudicial to the best interests of the public school to allow the principal of said school to deliver a course of popular lectures on the sciences of astronomy and geology in the town hall on Sunday evenings. May God hasten the day when such narrow-minded blockheads shall no longer sit like a dead weight—like an incubus—upon the institution where our children are compelled by necessity to acquire all the education they will ever get at public expense!

I am now in correspondence with a professor in a college of a neighboring county in the hope of getting from him the assistance that has been denied us here. The only thing that is now in the way is the inconvenience of getting back and forth, as the public conveyances do not run Sundays. The time is coming, and soon, when Sunday travel by public conveyance will be as common as Sunday preaching. In writing to the professor I informed him briefly of our movement here and its design, and I must read you an extract from his letter in response to mine. It was a soothing poultice to the wound my spirit had received by the rebuff of our school board. He said: "I am not entirely ignorant of the nature and design of your movement, having been told many things concerning it by residents of your town, whom I believe to be perfectly impartial, while sojourning there two or three days in the early summer. Of course, I can not, and I think I ought not to, give an affirmative indorsement to anything that I know so little about, but for the same reason I am equally far from condemning your movement. I heartily approve of its aims, as I understand them; yet for aught I know, its methods, or some of them, may be objectionable, and therefore require reforming. But as to such things I always act upon the advice of Gamaliel (quoting at random): 'If this work be of men, it will come to naught, but if it be of God, it can not be overthrown.' At all events, the word of God, as it is revealed in the starry heavens and by the rocky records of our earth, will do your people much good, and assist them in deciding whether your work be of God or no. I will gladly comply

with your request whenever we can surmount the difficulty of travel mentioned above."

I understand that some of my brethren of the orthodox churches think they have made an excellent joke on me by styling me a *goatherd*, they themselves claiming to be *shepherds*. Now, I don't mention this because I care anything about it, for I don't; but because whatever sinister reflection there may be in the appellation is upon you as well as me (for, if I am a goatherd, it is because I am a herder of goats), and I feared that, unless cautioned against it, some of you might resent the intended insult. I hope no one will do so. So much for prelude. I have chosen for my text this afternoon certain words of Tennyson, in his ode on the death of Wellington—

> "He never sold the truth to serve the hour,
> Nor paltered with Eternal God for power."

A few days ago I attended, as a spectator, a political county convention, and some of the doings there, and the thoughts excited thereby, have led me to select this text. If the chairman of that convention had been such a man as is described in the text, I think very likely my remarks to-day would have been on another subject, although the conduct of the chairman, which I am about to describe, is by no means so uncommon as it ought to be. But the chairman's crooked work was only one spoke in a whole wheel of crookedness. To begin at the beginning, a perfectly regular caucus, in a certain election district, had elected and duly commissioned a full set of delegates to represent the district in the said county convention; but these delegates were unsat-

isfactory to a certain clique of wire-pullers and office-seekers, who therefore caused another caucus to be called in the district. Nobody paid any attention to the new caucus, excepting the said clique of wire-pullers, who attended in very small force and went through the form of selecting a set of delegates satisfactory to themselves. Nearly everybody in the district laughed at the performance as an absurdity and waste of time; but the delegates made by this spurious caucus appeared at the convention and solemnly claimed the right to represent their district in the deliberations of the convention. The aforesaid wire-pullers were at work like beavers, among others of their kind from all parts of the county, for hours, if not days, before the meeting of the convention. A foolish custom prevails of allowing the chairman of the county committee to name the chairman of the convention. The chairman of the committee, in this case, was a man who aspires to a high and honorable office; and so the wire-pullers bribed him to name the man of their choice, by promising him in return their united support, at the proper time, in furtherance of his aspirations. The wire-pullers next sought a suitable tool for chairman of the convention, and they finally pitched upon Mr. Hayes, of Needleton, who has a very honorable reputation and is not known to be an office-seeker, but who is easily flattered with small favors. He readily pledged himself to appoint, for committee on contesting delegations, certain persons named by the wire-pullers, if the wire-pullers would make him chairman of the convention. The next work for the wire-pullers is to secure three persons for committeemen sufficiently

base to pledge themselves, in advance, to bring in a report in favor of the bogus delegation I have described. This done, it only remained to get some man of apparent respectability to make a motion, at the proper time, that the chair appoint a committee of three on contesting delegations, and the arrangements are complete, and the wire-pullers are ready to have the convention called to order. Like all dishonest practices, this dirty work has been carried on so secretly that the square-toed, straightforward men, who constitute the majority of the convention, have never suspected it. At the hour appointed for the meeting of the convention, Mr. Hayes is nominated for chairman, and duly chosen, without opposition. He makes a brief speech, in which he thanks the convention for the great honor which they have thrust upon him to his great surprise and confusion. He promises strict impartiality, and hopes, with their kind assistance and indulgence, to perform his duties with satisfaction to all. He then takes his seat, and the proceedings glide along smoothly until the matter of the contesting delegations is reached, when old, gray-headed Mr. Sayre, of Thimbleburg, rises in the back part of the house and gravely moves that a committee of three be appointed by the chair to hear and decide the questions between the contestants. This motion is duly seconded and carried—no one but the wire-pullers suspecting the trickery. Mr. Hayes then rises with great dignity, and, after looking over the convention for nearly a minute, as if selecting proper persons for the important work in hand, at last drawls out the names of the three persons secretly named to him by the wire-pullers. The committee

withdraw to a private room, followed by the contestants, and, after a jangle of perhaps an hour, the committee return to the convention and report that in their opinion the bogus delegation is in all respects regular, and entitled to seats in the convention, and that their competitors are irregular and not entitled to seats. Down to the moment of the reading of this report, the members of the delegation that I have called regular had been enjoying the most serene confidence in the justice of their cause and what they had considered the injustice of the claims and pretensions of their opponents; but now they are astounded and almost rendered speechless by the committee's report. Finally, just before it is everlastingly too late, one of them manages to stammer out an appeal from the decision of the committee. The chair announces the appeal and asks the convention what shall be done with it. Instantly one of the wire-pullers is upon his feet with a motion that the appeal be not entertained. He argued at considerable length that the convention, having no knowledge of the facts, would be obliged to give the parties a new hearing from the beginning; that the hearing before the committee had already consumed an hour of valuable time, and a new hearing before the convention could not be expected to consume less; that, unless haste was made, the convention would be unable, for want of time, to complete its labors that day; that the members of the committee were all honorable gentlemen, and equally as competent as the convention itself to decide the dispute fairly and properly upon all the facts; that a rehearing of the matter would lead to endless discussion and perhaps

to unseemly wrangling; for all of which reasons he was in favor of dismissing the appeal and sustaining the report of the committee. Another of the wire-pullers, in another part of the house, rose with the air of a sage, and remarked that he heartily concurred in the remarks of the gentleman who had preceded him, and for those reasons, as well as for the further reason that no question was raised as to the honesty, impartiality, and good faith of the committee, he would second the motion to dismiss the appeal and adopt the committee's report. The chair then asked if they were ready for the question, whereupon all the wire-pullers and all of their friends on the floor of the convention began shouting "Question! question!" One of the defeated delegates undertook to speak, but being unused to such work, and not being made of very stern stuff, he allowed the wire-pullers to howl him down; and so the motion was carried, and the deep sea closed smoothly over the spot where right and justice had been wrecked and sunk.

The mere statement of this case will bring words of condemnation from every fair-minded man and woman in the land; and yet such practices, and others equally vicious, are common in the caucuses and conventions of all parties in all parts of our country. Oh, how long will the pulpit of this enlightened age look upon such iniquity at the very fountain-head of our system of government, and maintain silence? "God of heaven! where sleep thy thunderbolts?"*

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* Uncle Job seemed to make use of this quotation more to give

Lest I may be charged with guessing at my facts, I will state how I got my information. In the first place, I haven't lived in this world sixty years without learning something of political methods, as well as what kind of conduct to expect from particular individuals, and from several indications I was firmly convinced of the trickery before the committee had retired to hear the contestants, and I mentioned my belief to several friends sitting near me. To make assurance doubly sure, as the convention was breaking up, I approached an acquaintance who I felt certain was one of the wheel-horses of the crooked job, and remarked to him that he had executed a very shrewd piece of work. He asked what I referred to, as though he thought he had done several shrewd things that day (and I have no doubt he had). I said I referred to the matter of the contesting delegations, and then he smiled all over, and went on and told me all about it, substantially as I have told it to you, and all through his story he snickered and exulted over his triumph much more, it seemed to me, than would have been in good taste if his conduct had been praiseworthy. I told him he ought to be ashamed of himself, but he only laughed the harder, and said, "Oh, they all do it." I answered that it was none the less wrong. Then he sobered his face, and said: "Yes, it is wrong. I frankly acknowledge it, and I wish as heartily as you do that we could engage in politics without stooping so low, but you must be aware that

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vent to a fit of indignation that suddenly seized him than on account of any special significance in the words themselves.—Rep.

there is very little square work done in politics nowadays, and that little is done by the fellows who always 'get left.' I would rather work straight than crooked, but I can't afford to be forever in the rear." He also said that the old idea that "honesty is the best policy" was no longer entertained by anybody but sentimentalists and "mossbacks;" that no man had ever achieved any great success by adhering closely to that policy, and that the great mass of the people sounded their plaudits for the successful man without stopping to inquire whether the success was honestly obtained or not. I said, in parting, that I thought if he would exercise the brilliant talent I had witnessed that day, in exposing and thwarting the crooked schemes of his opponents, possibly he would succeed in his endeavors even better than by joining issue in baseness and dishonesty. He smiled again as he uttered the single word, "*Perhaps!*"

Now, the iniquity of the scheme I have described could not have been carried out in the way it was if the chairman of the convention had been what he ought to be—an upright man—and hence I throw more blame upon him than I do upon any other participant in the villainy, even the wire-pullers who invented and managed it. Why? Because a man is chosen chairman of such a body because the whole body have confidence in his fairness and honesty, and believe he will deal impartially by all. A person whose fairness and impartiality in such a place is generally doubted, is never thought of for the position, and could by no means get there. Nobody looks for honesty and fairness in the wire-pullers,

and so long as they do not occupy any place of trust they at least do not betray anybody's confidence by their vicious practices. But when a chairman of any meeting, who has pledged himself to be fair and impartial (as he does by accepting the place), designedly violates both his pledge and the confidence reposed in him, I consider him just as culpable, from a moral point of view, as the merchant's clerk who embezzles the funds of his employer. A recent law provides that a chairman of a caucus or convention may be required to take an oath to perform his duties fairly, etc., but I see that little attention is paid to this law. In fact, even when the oath is taken, it seems to set very loosely upon some of the presiding officers. I heard one say just after being sworn, "Hm! what does a political oath amount to anyway?" I understood from his manner and his words that the oath would have no restraining force upon him. But, oath or no oath, if I were chairman of any sort of meeting, I would no more think of acting unfairly or one-sidedly than I would allow myself to be bribed by one party or the other who had a suit pending before me as a magistrate. Mr. Hayes has sunk in my estimation very near to zero since I witnessed the transaction I have related; and one object I have had in mentioning his name has been to sink him in the estimation of others, and in that way to create a wholesome public sentiment concerning such matters, in the hope that in that way this great evil may eventually be cured, for I firmly believe that no man of fair reputation in any community will readily consent to do an act which he knows must inevitably lower him in the public estimation.

If the wire-pullers could not find men of good repute, who are willing to become cat's-paws in the hands of scoundrels, very little of the nefarious work I am condemning could be accomplished, because the wire-pullers themselves are usually so well known that they have to keep in the background, as their open or avowed connection with any project will often kill it if the people have time to reflect. Hence they generally select for figureheads and cat's-paws orthodox deacons and rural M.D.'s who are vain and weak enough to be duped into the contemptible business. I want to be reasonably charitable to these people (the deacons and doctors), and I will therefore say that I think they do not realize the enormity of the sins they commit, but that they are often ignorant of the duties they undertake to perform, and for that reason simply do the bidding of those who gave them the promotion. They need to be educated.

I can not regard the conduct of the committee as one whit less reprehensible than that of the chairman. To be sure, they would have had no opportunity to play the traitor, except through the treachery of one higher in authority. But by accepting the appointment they pledged themselves to hear and decide the controversy like upright men, without fear or favor, and a deliberate violation of that pledge was no better than robbing a hen-roost. All the remarks I have made about the chairman will apply with equal force to the committee, and need not be repeated.

I shall not at present bear down very heavily upon the chairman of the county committee, for it is pos-

sible that he was not informed of the villainous purposes of the wire-pullers. He must, however, have been acquainted with the character of the men who asked him to appoint Mr. Hayes for chairman of the convention, and knowing that, he ought to have suspected that they were trying to make a tool of him for some purpose in keeping with their character. He cannot escape blame, but for the present we will give him the benefit of a doubt, and only charge him with culpable stupidity instead of being a designing accomplice. Whichever horn of the dilemma he may choose, it can not be denied that his weakness made the iniquity possible.

What remains to be said—what ought to be said—in reference to the wire-pullers who instituted and managed the whole proceeding? I despise both them and their vile conduct, and if every well-meaning man felt as I do on the subject, there would be far less of crooked political work done than there is now. At present wire-pullers are as thick in all political parties as frogs are said to have been at one time in the ovens and kneading troughs of Egypt, and the government of this country is almost entirely in their hands. Occasionally they become so bold and reckless with their wicked performances that the people get a glimpse of their work and evil designs, and then the righteous indignation of a virtuous populace smashes the enginery of corruption, and tramples nefarious stratagems into the dust. A great majority of the people would always be ready to do this, if they only had a reliable leader to tell them what machinery to break and where to do their stamping. But most people who make a

profession of politics are of the unsavory kind of wire-pullers I have been describing, and most people who do not make a profession of politics have their time too much engrossed in earning an honest livelihood to see and know for themselves all the detestable doings of the professional wire-pullers, and, therefore, they need to be kept fully and truthfully informed by some one who has both the time and the skill to ascertain the facts. This ought to be done by and through the press; but it has come to that that the political press is owned and run, for the most part, by the very class of wire-pullers that I am talking about, and although they are constantly fighting one another, and know all about one another's tricks, and are consequently best qualified of all the world to give the information mentioned, yet that peculiar sort of honor that thieves are supposed to possess, almost always keeps them from "squealing," as they term it, when they get caught in their adversary's trap. I have more than once written articles exposing some particular piece of political trickery, and handed them in for publication in the newspaper whose editor I thought would be interested in making the facts public, but my articles never were put into type. The duty, then, of teaching and leading the people right concerning these important questions, devolves necessarily and inevitably upon those who stand in the house of God and profess to preach righteousness therein. For my own part, I shall not shirk this duty, but will, to the best of my poor ability, endeavor to stem the tide of corruption that seems destined to overwhelm and destroy this great nation.

Wire-pullers are graded off in several ranks, according to the dirtiness of the work they perform, or according to their ability to "produce results;" but, as I view the subject, I see but little real difference in them, except that one may be a captain while another is only a private in the same company. Men have sat in the presidential chair of this republic, and in the governor's seat of this great Empire State, and in other high places, who commenced their political careers by doing just exactly such dirty work as I have described here to-day. In that business, as in every other, those who show most proficiency on the ground floor are soon promoted, and you will sooner or later find them wielding power as "bosses" over certain territory of greater or less extent; and when they have been thus advanced they usually become too high-toned to do, with their own hands, the degrading work that they expect from their underlings; but they lay out the plans and give directions to their servile tools how to execute them, and then fold their own arms and affect to know nothing of what is going on. These high-toned fellows are generally ambitious to hold office sooner or later; but by far the larger number of professional wire-pullers are not office-seekers for themselves, but sell their professional services for cash, or other valuable considerations, to those who are seeking office for honor or profit, or both. Nine-tenths of the immense sums of money that are used nowadays in political campaigns is handled by these scalawags—part of it they keep as compensation for their dirty work, and part they use in buying the votes of such poor, weak creatures as can be induced

to sell. I shall take occasion, in the near future, to speak at length on this whole subject of money in elections, and I will not, therefore, enlarge upon it at this time.

I have been unable to-day, for want of time, to give more than a single example of wire-pulling as it is carried on in the political primaries; but I can give you scores of different means that are employed from time to time to cheat a free people out of their blood-bought right to voice and influence in the government of their country. I may have occasion hereafter to point out other phases of the same great evil and to hold up to public scorn the perpetrators thereof.

These wrongs have a more far-reaching and wide-spreading effect than simply to wound the feelings of a half-dozen delegates in a rural community. Our government has its source, its very root and origin, in these election district caucuses and county conventions. It is in these, if anywhere, that the common people of our land are to make their influence felt in the government; and if they are cheated here, their much-vaunted right of self-government is lost. I do not forget that they still have a right to vote at the polls, but, as a general rule, that right is reduced down to a choice between two candidates both of whom have been placed in nomination by the same sort of foul work that we have been considering, and there is no great satisfaction in (and certainly no great benefit results from) smashing one machine by the building up of another that is just as bad. It must be plain to everyone that, if all of the springs

in which the powers exercised by our government have their origin are poisonous, or unwholesome, then the whole broad stream of government must also be corrupt. We have no right to look for purity in the government until we have purified the fountains thereof; and in that good work every man, however humble, can make himself heard and felt by attending the primary meetings, and there combining with other good men who are resolved not only to do fair and honorable political work themselves, but to compel all others to do likewise or step down and out. If men will not take the trouble to attend the primaries—the only place where they can make their individual sentiments effectively felt by those in power—then they have but little right to find fault because things do not go to suit them. I hold it to be just as much the duty of every good citizen to attend the caucuses as to vote at the polls. The government must be carried on by *somebody*, and if good citizens neglect to perform their duties in that respect, they must expect, as a matter of course, that their places will be occupied by the wire-pullers, and that bad government will be substituted for good.

Now, you boys and young men who have heard my talk to-day, I pray you to resolve immediately that, as soon as you are old enough, you will perform your whole duty to your country, honestly and faithfully, and will endeavor so to live that when you die it can truthfully be said of you, as was said in the text concerning the Iron Duke—one of the greatest generals England ever had, and who held at one time

the highest office in the British government—higher than the king—

> " He never sold the truth to serve the hour,
> Nor paltered with Eternal God for power.'

CHAPTER XIV.

CHURCH TRIALS—NOTORIOUS FRAUDS EXPOSED—UNCLE JOB SPEAKS.

REP. It was at about this time that the prosecutor lodged complaints against two of the members of the church; and although the trial and proceedings dragged along several weeks before finally decided, yet I think it the better way for me to tell the whole story right here, and as briefly as possible.

One member, whom I will simply call the defendant, had been admitted into the Church only five weeks before the complaint was made against him. In the spring of the year he had been elected assessor of the town in which he lived (embracing a part of the village of Pinville), and was now serving his first year in that office. The charge against him was that on the —th day of August he had, together with his associates, made oath to the assessment roll to the effect that they had estimated and set down the real estate described on the said roll at its full and true value, when in truth and in fact the said values as set down and sworn to by them were only one-fourth of the full and true values of said real estate; and the complaint alleged that this was done wilfully and in violation of the law of the land and of the

constitution of the Church. The complaint was drawn out at considerable length, with phraseology similar to a criminal indictment, but I have given above the boiled-down substance of it.

The defendant employed legal counsel in his defense, and numerous quirks and twists were made with the evident intention of having the decision turn on something else than the bare merits. The proof was very positive in favor of the prosecution, and the complaint seemed, to the non-professional eye, to be sustained by the evidence. In fact, it was hardly denied by the defendant that the value of the real estate as estimated by the assessors was exactly four times as great as the values thereof as set down in the assessment roll which was sworn to by them in due form. After the evidence was all in on both sides, the prosecutor and the counsel for the defendant made arguments before the committee; but, as the points made were substantially repeated before the whole body of the Church after the committee had reported, I will not consume space by detailing what took place before the committee.

On the coming in of the committee's report (which was, in effect, to find the defendant guilty of the offense charged, and to recommend him to mercy), and the consideration of the subject by the business meeting, the defense was in substance this: The statute prescribing the form of oath was read and also the oath as taken (both exactly alike), the material portion being as follows: "We do severally swear that we have set down in the foregoing assessment roll all the real estate situated in the town of ——— according to our best information, and that

we have estimated the value of the said real estate at the sums which a majority of the assessors have decided to be the full and true value thereof, and at which they would appraise the same in payment of a just debt due from a solvent debtor." The defendant's counsel argued from this that the defendant had not violated the law, for the assessors had duly *estimated* the land at its full value, but they had not sworn, and the law did not require them to swear, that they had *set down* the full value in the assessment roll; that if the defendant had been guilty of any offense, it certainly was not perjury; that, even admitting that the law-makers had failed to express their intention in the statute above quoted, and if the defendant had committed a technical offense against the *spirit* of the law, yet his conduct was justified by the uniform practice of all the assessors in the State; that he (counsel) had known town assessors to assess real estate at only one-sixth of its true value—they *estimated* the value all right, but they didn't set it down as estimated; that by common consent this was not considered to be a violation of the law; that if the law meant anything different from the universal practice, it had become a dead letter; that the people, who were higher than the law, did not wish to have this law interpreted or practiced differently from the way the defendant had done; that one community was obliged to undervalue its taxable property in self-defense, because if one town standing alone assessed at the full value while all others divided the true value by four, then that single town would have to pay just four times its fair share of the common

burden, thus receiving a severe punishment in return for its virtuous endeavors; and, lastly, that the defendant was new at the business, had not carefully studied the law, and simply did as his older associates did, without any intent to do any wrong, and as a wrong intent is the essence of every offense, without that wrong intent the defendant could not be found guilty, and should therefore be acquitted.

The prosecutor read another portion of the law, preceding the form of oath given above, which commends the assessors to set down in the assessment roll all land at its full value; and he argued at considerable length that the defendant had not only violated the spirit, but the plain letter, of the law; that he had committed a crime for which he might be indicted by a grand jury, and that, if so indicted, his pleas of ignorance, universal practice, common consent, dead letter, etc., etc., would avail him nothing. The prosecutor wound up his argument with the statement that all his sympathies were with the defendant; that it was known of all men that this law relating to the assessed valuation of taxable property had been systematically disregarded and violated for a great many years by all, or nearly all, the assessors in the State; yet their conduct was none the less criminal, and it would be very absurd, indeed, for any tribunal, religious or secular, to hold that a wilful violator of the law is not a criminal if he can prove that a good many other people are just as guilty as he is. He added that the proof and the law were plain, and that no defense had been made or suggested that would stand for a single moment in a court of law.

As soon as the defendant's counsel had finished his brief rejoinder to the argument of the prosecutor, all eyes were turned toward Uncle Job, who was presiding, and after a moment's pause he spoke substantially as follows, keeping his seat:

SAWYER. I have been most deeply pained by this whole proceeding from the moment when my attention was first called to the defendant's conduct which we are considering. I can not help thinking that, whatever he may have thought of the law, he certainly must have forgotten his try-square. I am especially sorry that anything of the kind should have happened so early in our history; but the facts being as they are it is our duty to look them squarely in the face, and to make such decision in the premises as honest, unbiased men and women ought to make. Care should be taken by all not to allow any feeling of sympathy, or its opposite, to have any influence upon our minds, and above all, let us not make the mistake so often made in church trials, of acquitting the defendant for fear that a contrary verdict will bring disgrace upon the church. Of all places in the world a church is the last that ought to be employed to cover up sin. Far better to let it be known to the world that sinners do sometimes creep into the church than to furnish proof that when once admitted they will be shielded from exposure by the whole power of the church.

The law, which it is charged has been violated by the defendant, was intended by the law-makers to secure an equal and exact distribution among the taxpayers of the burdens of government in proportion to the value of the property owned by each, and

if honestly and faithfully executed, it would come as near meeting the design of the legislators as any scheme that human beings are likely to invent; but if the law is persistently and systematically disregarded and trampled upon by all the officers charged with its execution, the aims of the law-makers to do justice to all alike come to naught, and the taxes are imposed by a sort of lottery in which the drawings are controlled by a set of wilful law-breakers. There is no fair way, no honest way, no just way, to do this business, except to strictly follow the law in letter and in spirit.

A point has been made here that the defendant has not committed the crime of perjury, and I am almost inclined to believe that under the strict rules of interpreting penal statutes, the defendant could not be convicted of that crime before a common law jury, although I am perfectly satisfied that the framers of the form of oath prescribed for the assessors intended that such a case as this should constitute the crime of perjury; but, in order to have freed the case from all doubt, the words *and set down* should have been inserted in the oath immediately after the word *estimated*. Criminal courts always give the defendant the benefit of every reasonable doubt, either of fact or law, and that may not be an unwise rule to adopt here, taking care, of course, that a reasonable doubt be always carefully distinguished from an unreasonable and absurd one. But this case does not hinge on the question of perjury. The law, independent and outside of the prescribed oath, commands the assessors to set down all real estate at its full value, and that command was flagrantly violated by the defend-

ant, according to the undisputed evidence, and this was a crime at law, as well as a violation of the try-square rule which is incorporated into our constitution. We cannot retain such a person in our membership, even if we wished to do so, without injuring the church and every member of it; and, therefore, obedience to the try-square rule requires us to expel the defendant.

Rep. At this point the defendant asked, and was granted, permission to make a personal statement. He frankly admitted that he had broken both the law of the land and of the Church, and, with tears rolling down his face, he begged earnestly and feelingly for mercy. He said he had resisted the other two assessors (who were old in the business) as long as he could; that they said he was squeamish, was one of the "goody-goodies," called him an old maid and an old granny, said he was too good for this world; that they showed him the old assessment rolls for years back, from which it appeared to be the regular custom to undervalue the real estate from fifty to seventy-five per cent.; that their persuasions and raillery at last overcame him and he reluctantly joined his associates in committing the offense for which he was now on trial. He pleaded most fervently for some other measure of punishment than expulsion. He said that expulsion from the Church would blast his reputation and his life. He was willing to submit to any kind of humiliation, except expulsion, which the meeting might see fit to subject him to.

This speech produced a very visible effect upon the meeting. Most of the women had use for their handkerchiefs, and several of the men bowed their heads

and kept them in that position for some time. There was dead silence for nearly two minutes after the defendant finished speaking, which was finally broken by

SAWYER. The defendant's appeal has moved my sympathies profoundly. But neither sympathies nor angry passions should be allowed to unhinge our minds from their proper equilibrium. We should not forget that the only defense there is in this case is the old, old one dating back to Adam's time. Adam said, "The woman gave me and I did eat," and Eve tried to screen herself by saying that a snake had beguiled her. The defense did not succeed in that early day, and I think it ought not to succeed now. I can see no other way but that the defendant must be expelled. If, in a year's time, he "shows works meet for repentance," that is, if he has firmness enough to adhere to the law in the next year's assessment, and should continue, in other respects, to be as good a man as I believe him to be, I shall be in favor of readmitting him into the Church; but at present I think he should be unconditionally expelled. I have said all that I feel called upon to say, and I think now that we who have no vote on this question should withdraw and leave the others to deliberate and decide this question unembarrassed and uninfluenced by our presence. I see that the constitution and by-laws are silent on that point, and a motion may be necessary, unless the suggestion is acted upon by common consent.

THE PROSECUTOR. The constitution and by-laws do not deprive anybody of the right to vote excepting the pastor. It would seem to be manifestly im-

proper for the defendant to vote on the question of his own expulsion, and certainly it would be a very delicate matter for the prosecutor to prosecute a man efficiently and then endeavor to vote impartially on the same question. Then there are the committee, who have acted somewhat the part of grand jurors—can they truly be called impartial after having once pronounced their opinion?

REP. The result of the discussion was that a new by-law was adopted which excluded from voting the prosecutor, the defendant (and his counsel if a member), and the committee. After the non-voters had retired, the meeting remained in secret session just three-quarters of an hour, when the doors were opened and their unanimous decision expelling the defendant was announced. It was explained on inquiry that some half-dozen were in favor of a less severe punishment, and that nearly all the time that the meeting was in secret session was consumed in the effort to make the verdict unanimous.

The other complaint was against Mr. Spalpo for attempting, by subterfuge, if not by downright perjury, to escape his fair and just proportion of the burden of taxation on his personal estate. Mr. Spalpo was an old resident of excellent repute who about two years previously had received a cash legacy of ten thousand dollars. It seems the assessors had a rule to assess every man for one-half of the personal property they believed he had, while they were putting down real estate at one-fourth its value, and in accordance with this rule they had assessed Mr. Spalpo for five thousand dollars of

personal estate the year previous to the complaint. He paid his tax on that assessment with many grimaces, because many of his neighbors, who he believed were worth much more in personal property than he was, were not assessed for personal property at all. In his efforts to find out how they managed to escape he questioned his banker, who told him that some escaped by point-blank perjury, and that others invested their surplus in government bonds, which were not taxable. Mr. Spalpo told the banker that he couldn't think of resorting to the first alternative, and that he very much disliked to pay the enormous premium on government bonds, to say nothing of the reduced rate of interest that the bonds would draw. The banker finally said, in substance, "There is a way of investing in government bonds sometimes practiced which may answer your purpose and yet not be open to the objections you urge," and the banker proceeded, at Mr. Spalpo's request, to explain how it was done. Banks, he said, were always dealing in government bonds, and would receive any man's order at any time for any amount. He said if a man should come to him just before the assessors begin their annual activity, and should order, say, five thousand dollars' worth of governments, giving a peculiar wink, and wanting to give his unindorsed note for the whole amount of bonds ordered, he (the banker) would understand him perfectly, and would say something like this: "All right. We have the bonds already in stock, and we will transfer them to you, but we shall be compelled to hold them in the bank as collateral security to your note until the note is paid." You

see, continued the banker, the bonds are yours, and they are not taxable, and, besides that, you owe a debt of five thousand dollars which will offset an equal amount of other personal property that would be taxable but for the debt. In this way you can go before the assessors and swear off your assessment for personal estate with a perfectly clean conscience, and after you have passed that ordeal you can come to the bank and take up your note by transferring the bonds back to us, and the whole thing will not need to cost you a single cent, as our trouble will be paid for by the ordinary business we are doing for you. To make a long story short, Mr. Spalpo acted upon the plan pointed out by the cunning banker, swore off his entire assessment for personal property, and was consequently arraigned before the church for malfeasance as previously stated. Such proof was made on the trial that the meeting, as well as the committee, were satisfied, and decided that Mr. Spalpo never in fact owned any government bonds; that he never ordered any in good faith, nor had any genuine intention of buying or ordering any; that his note at the bank never in fact had any legal inception so as to create any debt or liability against Mr. Spalpo, and that the whole pretended transaction was a gross fraud wilfully perpetrated by the defendant for the purpose of compelling his fellow-citizens to bear the share of the public burden which, under the law, should have been borne by himself.

Mr. Spalpo made a very vigorous defense—or it would be nearer to the truth to say that he flopped around about as energetically as a fish in a net—but

in spite of all his efforts the net continued to close round him until every chance for escape was cut off. He offered to give the names of twenty members of orthodox churches who had escaped taxation for years by the same device that he had endeavored to take advantage of, and which had been pronounced lawful and proper by the highest judicial authority in the State. He denied that he was attempting to evade the payment of his just share of the taxes, but he claimed that when the assessors put down real estate at one-fourth of its value, and put down one-half of all personal estate, the effect was to make the personal property stand just double its fair proportion of taxation, and he thought when the officers of the law were pursuing a man in that way unlawfully that the person pursued had the right to resort to any kind of stratagem in self-defense. He further said, in tones tinged with sarcasm, that while this Church was holding itself out to be the exponent of a *practical* religion, yet it had set its standards so high that conduct which has heretofore passed for good Christian behavior was here reckoned criminal, and ground for dismissal from the Church. He said that church discipline should take into account the fact that human nature is weak and sinful, and that the penalties should be very light, or remitted altogether, in all cases of great temptation.

SAWYER. There is no defense in this case in either equity or morals. In fact, I feel as though the original offense had been aggravated by some of the defendant's language, manners, and conduct during the trial. I hardly understood what he meant when he offered to give the names of members of orthodox

churches who had committed more offenses than he had, and still retained their standing in church; but when he scornfully told us that our standards were too high, and that our punishments should be regulated especially for the accommodation of those most prone to sin, then it seemed to me that he was casting ridicule at us, and was trying in that way to cause us to forget the merits of this case, and to decide it in his favor in order to save ourselves from ridicule. Now, it is nothing to us at present how many scoundrels other churches see fit to retain in their membership, nor have we anything to do with the standards of other churches. So far as this case is concerned, our standard is no higher than the law of the land ought to be, and certainly it will hardly be claimed that such law-makers as we have are likely to erect too high a moral standard. I have given some attention during the progress of this case to a decision of our Court of Appeals, which holds that such a device as Mr. Spalpo has resorted to is not unlawful, even if done for the express purpose of escaping taxation. But we are not bound here by the decision of courts, especially when they are, as in the case referred to, manifestly unjust and contrary to equity and good morals. Most of the judges of our higher courts are wealthy men, and some of them, I am informed, pay very light taxes. I do not know that any of them make use of the government bond dodge; but if they do, I can see how they might be interested in having such a transaction pronounced lawful. What the judges decide, whether right or wrong, becomes the law for all of us, so far as concerns our dealings with the State.

But members of this Church must conform their conduct to the try-square, or be subjected to proper discipline. This is by no means the only case where the try-square rule differs from the law of the land. It would not be unlawful for me to go into the street and proclaim to all I meet that my friend, Mr. Jonas, is a great liar and wholly unworthy of belief, or that I had caught him in the very act of committing adultery; yet if I should tell either of these things, I would myself be a great liar, and would deserve to be, and doubtless would be, unceremoniously kicked out of the Church. There is force in Mr. Spalpo's remarks about unequal assessment of real and personal property, but his true remedy for that does not lie in an act which only increases as to others the injury done by the officers, but rather in the opposite direction, namely, by making every lawful effort in his power to compel the officers to perform their duties as the law prescribes. One of the excuses given by the assessors for violating the law is that the people do not wish to have the law strictly executed. Now, suppose our friend Spalpo and his twenty brethren who are, like himself, dodging to escape assessment on their personal property, should unite in a determined effort to compel the assessors to obey the law, who doubts their ability to accomplish their purpose? If an assessor should be made to feel that the people looked upon him as a criminal as he walks the streets, he would very quickly mend his ways. Twenty men can do a great deal, if they try to, toward creating a wholesome public sentiment, and to do so is, I think, one of the first and highest duties of citizenship. The defendant

said something about self-defense which may appear to some to be more weighty than it really is. I shall not deny that it is sometimes proper for a person to strike back in self-defense, provided always that he strikes at his assailant, and is careful to injure nobody else; but in this case the defendant makes no effort to strike back at the officer who, he alleges, has injured him, but he undertakes to defend himself by striking at innocent third parties, and letting the offending officer go unpunished. It does not take a philosopher to decide that this is highly unjust and wrong.

One word more as to the defendant's sarcasm about our too high standard. Our standard is based squarely and simply on the question of right and wrong, as determined by the try-square, and if there are any human beings so base that they cannot restrain themselves from doing wrong, then I hold it to be the duty of society to restrain them by imposing upon them such penalties as may be found necessary for the purpose; and the *church* ought to be the great head and leader of society in this as well as in every other reformatory work. If rules are to be obeyed only by the good, and to be broken with impunity by the bad, as the defendant would seem to think ought to be the case, then the rules only serve to give bad people an unfair advantage over good ones, and rather than that this should be so it would be better to abolish all rules and give well-disposed people an equal chance in the world with the ill-disposed. But the vicious would be the first to object to this last proposition, for it would very soon put them under the influence of a healthy fear

of Judge Lynch. The duty of a good citizen is not done by simply obeying the law on his own part; but he should strive to have his fellow-citizens obey also, and this is best done by creating and maintaining a sound and healthy public opinion in support of the law. The law will never be lived up to or enforced when public opinion is in a demoralized condition. One of the objects of this Church is to teach men how to be good citizens, and it now has an excellent opportunity to give a lesson, with that object in view, by expelling this defendant, and I sincerely hope that the opportunity will not be allowed to be lost.

Rep. Mr. Spalpo was expelled by a unanimous vote of the meeting, and there seemed to be no sympathy manifested in his behalf, which was owing, doubtless, to the position of defiant effrontery assumed by him during his trial.

CHAPTER XV.

MORAL PROBLEMS—THE QUESTION OF RETURNING GOOD FOR EVIL—MORE ABOUT ELECTIONS.

THE usual time and place for the regular Sunday sermon.

SAWYER. Our mutual friend, Gustavus Nash, asks whether strict obedience to the try-square rule will require him, when smitten on one cheek, to turn the other also; or to take an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I imagine that my friend smiled all over his person when he wrote that little note, and I also imagine that he sits back there now laughing in his sleeve. Nevertheless I shall undertake to answer his question as seriously as I can. Above all else, a man ought to hold absolute and complete mastery over his own spirit at all times; and if he succeeds in that, his honest judgment at the moment when assailed will generally dictate the proper treatment. There are some persons who can always be instantly conquered by returning good for evil; but there are others who would thrive on that treatment, and would continue to requite your kindness with unkindness just as long as your meekness held out. This is perhaps only another way of saying that circumstances alter cases. In the former case I would

advise turning the other cheek, but in the latter case I would waste no sweetness on the desert air. The old Quaker must have been dealing with the latter kind of person, of whom he wrote to his wife, according to the poet, as follows :

"Thee knows I cultivate the peaceful habit of our sect,
But this man's conduct wrought on me a singular effect;
For when he slapped my broad-brim off, and asked, 'How's that for high?'
It roused the Adam in me, and I smote him hip and thigh."

I can not, however, bring myself to the point of advising any man, under any conceivable circumstances, to undertake the punishment of his adversary, by violent means, at least. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," is a saying of the Bible, which, being interpreted for practical use, means that punishment for all offenses should be laid on by the government—by society in its aggregate form, instead of by individuals—and I think the doctrine is correct.

Another note asks why we didn't call our society the Church of Practical *Christianity* instead of Church of Practical *Religion*. It seems to me that I have heretofore answered that question at least once ; but I will say again, in brief, that Christianity is *sectarian*, while we are *non*-sectarian, and we hope never to become otherwise. It is not our intention to add another sect to the thousands already in existence ; but, on the contrary, we have laid our foundation as broad as humanity, in the hope of eventually swallowing up and obliterating all sects.

A woman writes this : "You do not seem to know

that your Church, as you call it, utterly lacks real, genuine religion. I do not deny that you are a very moral people, and your standards of conduct are all right as far as they go; but religion, to one who knows what it is, is just as distinct from simple morality as light is distinct from darkness. Morality only concerns one's outward or physical conduct, while religion concerns the soul alone. There are many differences, perfectly plain to the initiated, but perhaps the plainest of all is that longing, that ineffable yearning after God which true religion breathes into one's soul, but which the simple moralist never feels, and therefore cannot understand. Although morality ought to, and usually does, underlie religion as a foundation, yet it forms no part of religion itself; but it ends at the point where religion begins."

Now I haven't the least desire in the world to combat a single word that this good woman has written. If it is as she says, I say amen to it. Let all who can get hold of what she calls genuine religion enjoy it to the utmost; but we poor creatures, who know nothing better than *practical* religion, ought certainly to be allowed to get what little comfort we can out of it without being taunted all the while by those who think themselves more fortunate.

I have noticed another difference between morality and religion not mentioned by our correspondent, and that is that when one has the kind of religion she describes—and has it real bad—he generally wants to compel everybody else, at the point of the bayonet, to get it too. But I don't wish to make light of, nor to criticise harshly, any communications made in good faith, as this apparently was. I want

to encourage, rather than discourage, every thinking person to bring forward his notions here, and thus make food for thought in the rest of us. I think I must, however, call attention to one point in this letter. The idea is clearly expressed that morality is not religion, and that religion is something entirely different and distinct from morality. It follows, then, inevitably, that religion may exist separate from and independent of morality. I never supposed this could be so, and I am very sure it is *not* so with what I call true religion; but there must be something in it, for it seems, from the newspapers, that the convicts in the state prisons are clamoring for freedom of worship. The religion these convicts enjoy must certainly be something different from morality. And I have seen many people outside of state prison who fell far short of being moral persons according to my standard, who yet professed, and seemed to enjoy, what they called religion. Now, I ask, in all sincerity, if the possession of that kind of religion is any credit to a man or woman, either here or hereafter. I have heard mercantile men say that the fact that a man belongs to a church never weighs a feather with them in deciding whether to give him financial credit. This is not as it should be; and I fervently pray that the time will come, and that speedily, when the fact that a man is a member of the Church of Practical Religion will be a badge of the highest honor to him wherever he goes, and entitle him, without security, to financial credit for every dollar he asks for. I shall make no effort to possess myself of any kind of religion that may be enjoyed on

an equal footing by the convicts in state prison and the saints in heaven.

I read for our instruction to-day from the statute law and from the constitution of the state of New York. The statute is as follows:

"It shall not be lawful for any candidate for any elective office, with intent to promote his election, or for any other person, with intent to promote the election of any such candidate, either,

"1. To provide or furnish entertainment at his expense, to any meeting of electors, previous to, or during the election at which he shall be a candidate; or,

"2. To pay for, procure, or engage to pay for, any such entertainment; or,

"3. To furnish any money or other property to any person for the purpose of being expended in procuring the attendance of voters at the polls; or,

"4. To engage to pay any money, or deliver any property, or otherwise compensate any person for procuring the attendance of voters at the polls; or,

"5. To contribute money for any other purpose intended to promote an election of any particular person or ticket, except for defraying the expenses of printing, and the circulation of votes, handbills, and other papers previous to any such election, or for conveying sick, poor, or infirm electors to the polls."

The constitution provides that every person who has been elected to any office, shall, before entering upon the duties of his office, make oath, among other things as follows:

"And I do further solemnly swear that I have not directly or indirectly paid, offered or promised to pay, contributed, or offered or promised to contribute, any money or other valuable thing as a consideration or reward for the giving or withholding a vote at the election at which I was elected to said office, and have not made any promise to influence the giving or withholding any such vote."

Another provision of the constitution reads as follows: "No person who shall receive, expect, or offer to receive, or pay, offer, or promise to pay, contribute, offer, or promise to contribute to another, to be paid or used, any money or other valuable thing as a compensation or reward for the giving or withholding a vote at an election, or who shall make any promise to influence the giving or withholding any such vote . . . shall vote at such election;" and further provisions follow, prescribing the mode of disfranchising the guilty party.

Rep. Uncle Job read all of the above quotations over very carefully and slowly a second time, and some parts of them he read several times, making such explanatory comments as he thought necessary to a clear understanding of them. I can only give a summary of that portion of his remarks.

Sawyer. These enactments are so very plain that they require no explanation from an expert; but every person who understands the English tongue can comprehend their meaning by the simple reading of them, as well as the professional lawyer. The statute I first read, after condemning certain things which prior experience had shown to be baneful, winds up with a sweeping condemnation of the use of money for any other purpose intended to promote the election of any person or ticket, except—now mark carefully the exception—except for defraying the expenses of printing, and the circulation of votes, handbills, and other papers *previous* to any such election, or for conveying sick, poor, or infirm voters to the polls. Now, every cent of money that is spent in any election is so spent solely for the purpose of

promoting the election of some person or ticket, and when it is so spent for any purpose not embraced within the exception I have just repeated, it is used *unlawfully*, and the person who uses it, or contributes it, for such unlawful purpose, is a *criminal*—a rank offender against the safeguards erected by our fathers for the preservation of that freedom which they had purchased for us by their valor and with their blood.

I believe that very many who use money unlawfully would not do so if they knew exactly what the law is. They have, perhaps, heard that it is unlawful to buy votes, and so long as they avoid the very act of bribing a voter, they seem to think they are doing no wrong. I am determined, therefore, to do my part toward teaching them the law, so that hereafter those who hear me preach shall sin, if at all, in the face of full light and knowledge. I often think that if the pulpit generally would pay less attention to the laws and customs of the ancient Jews, and more attention to the laws of the land in which they live, the world would be the better for it.

Again, it may be said that the law-abiding portion of the community has a very vague and faint conception of the awful extent to which the election laws are violated in almost every election, and even in town meetings and the charter elections in cities and villages; and for that reason, as well as for the purposes of illustration, I shall devote the remainder of my remarks on this occasion to the giving of brief outlines of a few of the many ways in which money is corruptly used to cheat a liberty-loving people out of their supposed heritage of freedom.

You will observe that the law makes no provision

for paying public speakers, nor for conveying them from point to point where they are to speak. I can not help thinking that this was an oversight in the law-makers; for it seems to me to be just as proper, in a moral point of view, to pay for information through the medium of public addresses by learned and eloquent speakers, as by way of printed matter circulated either through the post-office or by manual delivery. But as the law stands, all payments to political speakers for hire or for expenses, where the effort is to promote the election of any person or ticket, are contrary to law. I think the law should be so amended as to render such expenses proper, for a law that nobody can see any justice in breeds contempt for all law—the good as well as the bad.

There is another respect in which I think this law could be made better. Suppose, for instance, that Brother Nash and I are opposing candidates for a county office. He owns a horse and carriage and can drive about among his friends without expense, and I can not see that the law prohibits it. I have no conveyance of my own, but am accustomed to hire one as occasion requires; but if I wish to hire one for the purpose of promoting my election, or even to promote the election of another man, the law steps in and says that the spending of money for such objects is unlawful. I think this prohibition might well be modified so as not to condemn such hiring as I have mentioned—and yet I believe such hiring, in this and all similar cases, should not be permitted except for the personal use of the candidate, or person paying the money; for otherwise this method might be employed as an indirect means of bribery.

Again, the law permits the unlimited use of money for the circulation of printed documents before the election, without specifying how they shall be circulated. Therefore a candidate, or other person, may pay out thousands of dollars to spread *printed* information among the people by messengers driving four-in-hand; but if the information to be conveyed is *written* or *oral*, it is unlawful to spend a cent for its distribution. And yet again, one may spend any amount of money in postage on printed matter, but he is forbidden to use even a two-cent stamp on a private letter to a friend asking for his assistance in a political campaign. It does not require a philosopher to see that this is not as it should be.

But the worst of this matter is that these laws are almost wholly disregarded and violated, directly or indirectly, by nearly everybody who has anything to do with politics. Our elections have come to be but little better than auctions where votes and public offices are bought and sold in market overt. Very many of our best men, who would scorn to do an unlawful act themselves, in a direct manner, have, nevertheless, through their ambition for political preferment, felt compelled to yield so far to the prevailing corruption as to furnish the means of corruption while holding their heads high and pretending to know nothing about it. One of the ways that these men manage is by paying their money to a *committee*, who take upon themselves the general control of the campaign. There are in every town a number of political prostitutes, about equally divided between the two great parties, and from these are generally selected the committees

who are expected to do the dirty work of the campaign, and to employ others, equally as vile as themselves, to assist them. The first thing the committees do is to assess each of the candidates to the extreme point of endurance, and in fixing the amount of the assessment the committees are seldom governed by the size of the candidate's anticipated salary, but rather by his ability to pay; and woe to the candidate who growls at the assessment or refuses to pay it, for all the assistance he will receive from the prostitutes after that will be of the left-handed kind.

The amount of money sometimes raised by these committees is enormous—absolutely monstrous—and outsiders who sometimes get an inkling of the immensity of the sums raised wonder what uses are made of it. The aggregate paid for the purchase of voters at the polls is large; but it requires a very much larger sum to satisfy the prostitutes.

Perhaps I ought to give a little better definition of what I have designated a political prostitute, although many of you understand my meaning perfectly, and doubtless have in mind, at this moment, one or more of those persons whose very names, if spoken here, would be a better definition than words can make. These men have no principles; or, at least, none that they will not sell for a sufficient consideration. Some claim to be Democrats, some Republicans, and occasionally one will parade under the banner of the Prohibitionists, or the so-called Labor Reformers. All of them claim to control a greater or lesser portion of the party to which they have attached themselves, or perhaps they will only claim to control a certain number of votes in a particular locality.

They are all pretty active in political matters, when well paid for their work, but none of them will do anything, even for the party to which they claim to belong, without money. When the time comes for a campaign to open, these prostitutes—the whole of them alike—stand and wait to be "*seen*," as they call it, by the candidates or committees; and if they are not "*seen*" quite so early as they think their importance deserves, they begin to growl, and criticise their party leaders and perhaps the candidates also. This growling and criticising is done for the purpose of bringing the candidates or committees "*to time*." If a candidate approaches one of them, he will find, after a careful pumping, that nothing but a considerable sum of money will sweeten the prostitute's disposition. If the candidate objects to such a transaction as illegal and criminal, the prostitute is full of resources, and will propose half a dozen different ways, in less than a minute, in which he thinks it may be done without violating the law. I heard of a case not long ago where the prostitute suggested to a sensitive candidate to leave a certain sum of money in a particular place at a particular time, where, of course, the prostitute could find it and take it. Sometimes the prostitute will propose to sell the candidate a worthless bit of property, or to perform some trifling service, at an enormous price, or even to *borrow* the sum required, with the tacit understanding that the money is to be used for political purposes. It is needless to say that any such device is no *evasion* of the law, but a direct *violation* of it, and the successful candidate who takes the constitutional oath of office, after paying money to these

prostitutes, under any conceivable form of cunning device, commits wilful and corrupt perjury. It is also needless to say, in this community, that not one man in fifty who consents to run for office has sufficient strength of character to unyieldingly resist the importunities and threats of these unspeakable scoundrels that I have called prostitutes only because it would be impolite to speak their right name.

Sometimes—once in a long time—a candidate will stubbornly refuse to be bled, and then the prostitutes, individually and collectively, "kick" against him. If it happens, as it sometimes does, that opposing candidates for a particular office are equally upright and stubborn, then follows a period of most awful sulkiness in the camp of the prostitutes. But it is the especial delight of the prostitutes (and they usually exercise themselves to that end) to have both of the leading political parties nominate candidates who have money and are willing to use it to promote their election, for at such times all of the prostitutes can find congenial employment at remunerative wages.

Some of these prostitutes have of late been assuming a sort of *professional* attitude. That is to say, suppose one of them to claim membership with the Republicans, yet he advertises his professional services as for sale to the party or candidate offering the most advantageous terms. You will frequently find him working and talking zealously for the Democrats while solemnly protesting that he is a Republican, and pledging himself to cast his personal vote for the Republican candidates; but I

never have any faith in these professions. They are false pretences made for the purpose of keeping up a pretended connection with some political organization; for you may depend upon it that the candidate or committee who bargained for his *services* bought his vote also.

Aside from their services in the act of buying votes, these prostitutes have very little influence in political affairs after their true characters become generally known in the communities where they operate. There are, to be sure, a few ninnyhammers in all neighborhoods who are likely to mistake the endless and noisy effusions of interested wind reeled off by these prostitutes as expressions of public sentiment; but solid, well-informed people will not be long in ciphering out the full value of all that escapes from one of these whited sepulchers.

There is still another class of base beings that I have no name for, who are, in my estimation, no better, morally speaking, than the prostitutes whom I have attempted partly to describe. The base beings to whom I allude will resort to all the artifices to get money from candidates and committees that are employed by the prostitutes for the same purpose; but the former lack the activity, enterprise, and courage of the latter. There appear to be about as many of these base beings as there are of prostitutes in every community, and they also, like the prostitutes, belong, or claim to belong, in about equal numbers, to one or the other of the great political parties; but they are not so easily detected and understood as the prostitutes are by people who are not conversant with the workings of the political

machine. I have one in my mind's eye whom I will partially describe, though I deem it best at present to withhold his name and residence. He is a middle-aged man, head of a family, a farmer living on his farm, is esteemed wealthy by his neighbors, is a deacon and teacher of a Bible class in a Christian church, and is looked up to by many of his acquaintances as a model to be patterned after, with perhaps the one exception that he is rather more miserly than is desirable. Notwithstanding his penuriousness his name generally heads the lists of subscribers in his locality for books or other articles sold by agents on subscription. I have been fully informed by several agents of their manner of dealing with this man. He probably never paid full price for a book in his life, yet he owns a fair library of expensive books. The agents know that his name on their lists will help them to sell to others in that town, and so they *bribe* him to subscribe. Some agents have given him the article or book outright in exchange for his signature. Others manage to make him pay a little cash in addition to signing his name; and others again have found it impossible to get his signature to their list without actually paying him money for it. This is a digression, but it seemed necessary in order to give an accurate picture of the base being I am attempting to describe. During every political campaign this style of man invariably goes to the committee or candidates of his party (and perhaps to both and all), asking for money—from ten dollars upward, according to the magnitude of the interests involved in the election. He generally claims to control about twenty-five

votes, and he intimates that the money is to be paid to the voters; but the wily politicians understand perfectly that whatever money they let him have will go into his own pocket and stay there, and so they usually manage to put him off with less than he demands; but yet they have to give him *something* to prevent whatever influence he has from being exerted against them. His neighbors seldom know that the political opinions which this man expresses to them in measured and sanctimonious tones have been made what they are, or continued so, by the corrupt use of money. This class of political blood-suckers seems to be increasing from year to year to an alarming extent. It will be found that most of them are flint-skinners, and having found out that there is money in politics, their inordinate greed and desire for gain send them after it just as naturally as a crow goes for carrion. The politicians regard these base beings as "bell-wethers," so to speak—leaders of their respective flocks—and it is for that reason that they regard it as expedient to buy their good-will.

It would, perhaps, be unjust to this class if I failed to add that they are generally (as are also some of the prostitutes), when they ask for, or receive, money, careful to asseverate over and over again that their individual action will not be influenced by the money; that their zeal in the desired direction is too great to need any stimulus, and that they want the money to add scope for their zeal and to enlarge their field of usefulness. The persons who pay the money, however, are seldom deceived by these protestations, but accept them at their true market value.

What shall be said regarding the miserable, abandoned, shameless wretches who sell their votes for the paltry dollar or two which is paid them by the prostitutes? I shall not undertake to describe them, for you know them too well already. Most of them are both poor and ignorant; but I firmly believe that nine-tenths of them could be reformed, and the young deterred from swelling their ranks, if Church. school, and enlightened public opinion should all combine and exert themselves energetically to educate and *shame* them out of the low mental and moral estate into which they have fallen.

I have thus far only mentioned the men who *absorb* the political corruption funds, and I have yet to speak of those who *contribute* money for unlawful use. I must cut short the remainder of my remarks at this time, as I find I have already nearly reached my usual limit of time. The men who furnish the funds are the corrupters of all the other classes of which I have spoken, and they are the chief persons aimed at in the penal statutes on the subject; and yet most of them, when you can get at them to talk frankly with them, profess to be profoundly disgusted with the whole business, and express hearty wishes that the moneyed men of all parties would combine to suppress all demoralizing practices in political work; but they contend that until such reformation comes to pass they must continue to supply blood for the blood-suckers or abandon politics altogether—and so it goes from bad to worse, and where or when it will stop can not be foretold. The public mind seems to be either thoroughly debauched, or in a state of sublime indifference, on this subject. It is

said that Sodom was sunk for its wickedness, and whether we believe the story to be literally true or not does not matter, for we *do know* the logical fact that "the wages of sin is death;" and I warn my countrymen that unless a radical reform of these matters comes speedily and effectively, the government which now seems so stable and so admirably perfect will one day tumble about their ears in the twinkling of an eye, and chaos will reign again in the earth. I shall take an early occasion to refer to this subject again; but I feel that I cannot close these remarks without mentioning by name a few of the most prominent offenders, so far as furnishing the means of corruption is concerned. I shall not at this time go beyond the bounds of our own county, but I shall be likely to enlarge my territory, and give a more complete catalogue, on future occasions.

Most conspicuous of all is General Humbug. Does anybody know how he acquired his military title? It should be known of all men who use their reasoning powers, and put known facts together, that, in the palmy days of notorious Tweed, this Mr. Humbug was so close a friend of that arch thief and vile corruptionist that the latter intrusted to him a large sum of money, to be used for the purpose of overturning the large majority which we had been accustomed to give in this county in opposition to the said Tweed and his villainous schemes. Tweed was renowned for good judgment in the selection of his instruments to do his damnable work, and the result of Mr. Humbug's agency showed that no exception had been made in his case. The election that fol-

lowed was perhaps the most disgraceful that ever took place in this county. The money was nearly all on one side at that time, and so the prostitutes and the other base beings I have mentioned were nearly all on that one side, as well as a large majority of the purchasable voters. Election officers were bribed to make false returns of the votes cast, and especial pains were taken to get money, by some pretense or other, into the hands of as many men as possible who were likely to be drawn as grand jurors. This was done to prevent outraged justice from following the offenders with criminal prosecutions; for, under our system of penal administration, no one can be punished for such offenses as we are now discussing, unless at least twelve members of a grand jury vote in favor of the prosecution. And, as supervisors of towns have the selection of grand jurors, efforts were also made to corrupt as many supervisors as were susceptible thereof. After sending his agents with money and whisky to all the other polling-places in the county, on election day, Mr. Humbug went personally, with a large sum of money and many bottles of whisky, to the polling-place in his own district, and there, during the whole day, he personally debauched, with money and with whisky, as many of the voters of his district as he could reach by such influences. These facts were brought out under oath before a grand jury; but no indictment was found, for reasons before explained. Through such agents and agencies as these, this county, and the State of New York, were carried in the interest of Tweed and the devil. The person chosen governor by these vile means chose Mr. Hum-

bug to be a brigadier general on the governor's military staff—an office which consists wholly of the title, and was created expressly for the purpose of rewarding villains for villainous work—and thus it was that Mr. Humbug won the title of "general," on a field where filth flowed instead of blood. I can never bear to call him "*general*," nor to hear him so called; for it always brings up unpleasant recollections, and it *will* seem to me that he can not feel very proud of a title so ignominiously won. In his case, I regard it as the very opposite of an honorable title. It should be said that not long after that infamous election, Mr. Humbug was so completely *shamed* in public, by one brave little man, for the conduct I have described, that he has never repeated it, so far as concerns his personal participation in the dirty work, and he has been known to express a wish that such practices could be abandoned. I mention this last merely to show what a vast influence for good could be exerted if the people who privately condemn these things would denounce them from the house-tops; and my object in naming these men here is to endeavor to concentrate upon them, and their wickedness, the eyes and the scorn of all decent people. But Mr. Humbug has not altogether reformed, for he is an annual contributor to the filthy pool from the abundance of which he is possessed. He claims that he can't stop it without having all the prostitutes and base beings charge him with stinginess. Knowing what they do of him, they would laugh to scorn the suggestion that he was swayed by twinges of conscience.

Then there is the so-called *Honorable* Mr. Bottle. What right has he to the title of *honorable?* What honorable thing did he ever do in his life that should entitle him to be thus dubbed? I will tell you all I know about it, and you can draw your own conclusions. For twenty years he had been a political prostitute of the meanest, most despicable pattern. He had held several local offices of minor importance which he purchased; but his principal occupation had been to assist other men to get office. At last, by the death of relatives, he fell heir to a considerable property, and his ambition grew in proportion to the growth of his estate. He aspired to become a member of the State Legislature. He did not care whether the people wanted him in that place or not; but he deliberately bought the nomination first, and the election afterwards, as everybody knows; and since then, and for that sole reason, he is called the *Honorable* Mr. Bottle. Immediately after the auction at which he bought his title, I saw, with shame and indignation, members (and ministers, too) of Christian churches, who knew all of the facts, rush to him with extended hands and beaming faces, calling him the *Honorable* Mr. Bottle, and congratulating him on his success at the auction, which they styled an election. "O Judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts, and men have lost their reason!"

I will be pardoned, perhaps, if I next mention the *Honorable* Mr. Puppet, which I do, not because I deem him of any special importance in himself, but because he fairly represents a certain variety or species to be met with all over the country. When

we first made his acquaintance, a few years ago, he had no visible means of support. He claimed to be a lawyer, but he had no practice, if we except some half-dozen cases, in each of which his conduct was such that his clients charged him with selling out their interests. He was soon found to be a political prostitute, and he succeeded so well in that business that he soon became a "boss." Some people wondered how he managed to rise above his previous impecuniosity so suddenly, but it finally became settled that he was only one of General Humbug's tools. He still appeared to have no other occupation than the dirty political work he occasionally performed for his owner. Whisky he indulged in at all times, and gamblers and bad women were his principal associates. When General Humbug wished to control the affairs of this village he purchased trusteeships for Mr. Puppet, and others like him; and other local offices were purchased by the general for this tool as his need or fancy dictated. At length a city millionaire took it into his head to buy an election to the United States Senate, and after a conference with General Humbug it was decided to send Mr. Puppet to the Legislature, the said millionaire agreeing to contribute largely towards his campaign expenses. Of course, Mr. Puppet was declared duly elected, and, of course, the *Honorable* Mr. Puppet cast his legislative ballot for the said millionaire for the once honorable office of Senator in the Congress of the United States. The *Honorable* Mr. Puppet was returned to the Legislature the succeeding year by the same means first employed,

except that probably the said millionaire contributed less to his elective expenses. Since he retired from the legislature, Mr. Puppet has had every appearance of being possessed of considerable wealth. How he acquired it I do not know, but I have a decided opinion on the subject which need not be expressed at the present time. The "general" takes less interest in politics now than formerly, and consequently has less use for his former tool, and so the latter has for some time past been enjoying a sort of political Indian summer—paying slight attention to politics, assuming airs of great dignity, and endeavoring to worm himself into decent society. I am told that he contributes quite liberally every year to the corruption fund, but he does it in a quiet and mock-dignified manner quite unnatural to him according to our former understanding of his nature. Of late I hear that he is indulging an ambition to go to the State Senate. If this turns out to be true, you will soon hear his hireling prostitutes sounding his name, and praising his virtues and greatness throughout the length and breadth of this Senatorial district. Of course, I shall do what little I can to compass his defeat; but in the present state of debauchery and indifference of the public mind, I have little doubt that he will succeed if he makes a bold push.

I must positively stop right here and now, although there are a thousand things pressing upon my mind and seeking expression; but I shall doubtless have other occasions, if life lasts, when I can further illustrate this momentous subject. I will

only detain you now to express the hope and prayer of my heart that the Church of Practical Religion, wherever its influence is felt, will exert that influence *powerfully* for the correction of the mighty evils I have pointed at, and in so doing, in my judgment, we shall be performing one of the most acceptable services in the vineyard of God.

CHAPTER XVI.

MORE OF POLITICS—WHEN MONEY MAY BE LAWFULLY SPENT THEREIN—SOME REMEDIES SUGGESTED.

REP. From this point on I shall have to make up the chapters arbitrarily to a great extent, as in my work of condensation I am compelled to pick out odd bits from here and there, and arrange them without much regard to consistency or time.

In his discourse immediately following the one given in the last chapter —

SAWYER. When I parted from you last Sunday I felt a keen sense of shortcoming, for it seemed to me as if I had left untouched more points and illustrations of importance than I had succeeded in crowding into my remarks on that occasion, and I determined to make a further effort in the same direction to-day, adding many interesting details to the biographical sketches I then outlined, besides drawing several new portraits of a number of other men who ought to be in the penitentiary for their crimes against free government. Since then, however, I have been personally visited by no less than fifteen persons who implored me in the most piteous and supplicating tones and manner to forbear naming them, as they feared I would do. They unani-

mously and frankly admitted the entire truth and justice of my remarks last Sunday in so far as they had been informed of what I then said, and they did not attempt to deny, nor even to extenuate, their own criminality, nor did any of them beg for mercy on their own accounts; but each and all prayed me to spare their innocent wives and children the pain and mortification of being publicly told what detestable creatures they were cherishing as husbands and fathers. I was loth to grant their prayers, but as every one of them gave me his most solemn and apparently heartfelt pledge never to engage in or countenance such damnable work again in his life, I at length concluded that perhaps I had already accomplished in their cases all the object I had in view, and so I promised not to point them out specifically by name or otherwise, so long as their reformation appeared to be real and sincere, but at the same time I assured them, and I assure you, that on receipt of the first bit of solid evidence that any one of them has backslidden, he will hear from this place such thunder as I am able to command.

Several well-meaning men, as well as several not so well-meaning, have during the past week asked me if it was not lawful for a candidate or committee to employ and pay men to stand near the polls on election day and distribute tickets to the voters. Several have stoutly contended that the law authorized this to be done. I just as stoutly contended, and still contend, that the law expressly forbids and condemns such employment. I clinched my argument with them by reading the law itself from the ponderous volume of statutes, and pointing out that

the very sentence which authorizes the hiring of men to circulate votes, etc., contains these limiting words: "*previous to any such election.*" It is proper to pay a reasonable sum in good faith for the distribution of tickets, handbills, etc., *before* an election, but not *at* or *during* an election. I say a *reasonable sum in good faith* to distinguish a proper use of money from an improper use of it, for I have heard of cases where unreasonable sums have been paid in bad faith, and yet with a pretense of keeping within the law. For instance, Mr. Bottle paid Mr. Puppet, when the latter was in the prostitute business, two hundred dollars the day before election, ostensibly for Mr. Puppet's *services in circulating* Mr. Bottle's tickets during one afternoon and evening. Now, does anybody believe that Mr. Bottle, after twenty years' service as a prostitute, was greenhorn enough to actually pay to another prostitute in good faith so large a sum for so small a service as was here pretended? No, of course not. We know Mr. Bottle to be a man of average mental capacity, and we, as reasonable beings, must refuse to believe that he paid that money without expecting in return what he considered a fair and reasonable equivalent? What was that equivalent? What did he expect such a man as he knew Mr. Puppet to be would do with that money to make it render an equivalent to Mr. Bottle? Without wasting words I assert that manifestly and palpably Mr. Bottle paid that money with the complete understanding that the major portion of it would be used in the corruption of voters, and that the balance would be retained by Mr. Puppet as compensation

for his criminal work. Then, how could the *honorable* Mr. Bottle make the most solemn declaration that it is possible for man to make—an *oath*—that he had not contributed any valuable thing to influence the giving of a vote? "*O tempora, O mores!*"

I must not omit to say a few words concerning the political committees. They perform certain functions that seem to me to be proper and right, but of late years their chief office appears to be to scrape together from every available source vast corruption funds, over which the prostitutes and other base beings hold high carnival. This has come about for two reasons mainly; first, the committees, being composed largely of prostitutes, have gradually usurped this office for the sake of handling the money, and so being able to hang on to more or less of it; and, second, the candidates have acquiesced in the usurpation because it has relieved them largely from personal participation in, or actual knowledge of, the crooked work which they have supposed to be necessary in order to achieve political success. Doubtless, when the committees first began to assume this office, they did so with perfect propriety, and, no doubt, they conducted themselves with propriety for some time afterwards, for we have reason to believe that there was once a time when such a thing as buying votes was unheard of, and when political prostitutes and similar base beings were unknown. But the corrupt practice having gained a foothold in congenial soil, it has grown seemingly beyond control.

It must be well understood to any one who has read, or heard read, the laws that I read to you last

Sunday that strictly legitimate political expenses can not be exceedingly large; but in some way the prostitutes have caused people to believe that the *proper* expenses are very much larger than they really are. For instance, many people suppose that the expense of printing tickets is something incomprehensibly vast. I know by actual experience that all the tickets required by the Republican party in this whole county (including Electoral, State, Judiciary, Congress, Senate, Assembly and County) can be obtained, in suitable packages for delivery to each election district, for the small sum of ten dollars. It ought not to be necessary to pay one cent to have the tickets duly delivered at the several polling places, for there are plenty of good, patriotic men belonging to every party who would see to that business without charge if they were permitted to; but as it is now managed, the prostitutes generally do it, and help themselves to a liberal fee for the service.

One very serious evil (to skip over the more obvious ones) growing out of what I may call the prostitute system of politics is the enormous burden it imposes upon the taxpayers, for these immense corruption funds have to come out of them sooner or later. Name to me, if you can, a single salary, or a single fee, of any public officer, high or low, that has not been largely increased (sometimes more than doubled) since the prostitute system came into vogue!

I know whereof I speak when I allege that one of the strongest arguments used by the politicians in endeavoring to get salaries and fees raised, and in

keeping them up, is, that the expenses of procuring the office, and the annual assessment demanded afterwards, reduce the income from the office to insignificance. The necessaries of life, and luxuries too, are cheaper now, on the average, than they were twenty-five years ago, and there is no lawful reason why we should pay our public officers more money now than we did then for the same service. But look! Then we paid our members in the Legislature $300 a year. Now we pay them $1,500. Then we paid our governor $4,000 a year. Now we pay him $10,000. Then we paid our President $25,000. Now he gets $50,000. And so on in the same ratio clear down to constable. All the persons, of all parties, who profit in any manner by politics, constitute a brotherhood when it comes to this one question of wresting money from the taxpayers, and it is perfectly awful to hear the derisive howl they will set up in concert at any man who has the bravery to make an earnest endeavor to defend the public treasury against their assaults. Among the epithets they apply to him they never forget to call him a *demagogue*, and this word they harp on so persistently that the chances are ten to one that the deluded taxpayers will join in the cry, and actually help to destroy their intended benefactor. I have seen this done more than once, and it will probably be done many times hereafter; but the time is coming when "the last feather will break the camel's back," and when the long-suffering taxpayers will open their eyes wide, and then they will suddenly turn this government over, ca-chug!

Thinking people have been for some time noting

the fact that this seems to be a period when nearly all the large places are occupied by very small, and not very good, men; and when nearly all of our really great and good men are not only in comparative obscurity, but are unwilling, for the most part, to enter into a scramble with the prostitutes. As one man expressed it, he would not get down on his belly and wallow in hell for *any* office, however high or lucrative. This state of things, I believe, is the direct, logical, and inevitable consequence of the prostitute system of political management. You know, my friends, that you have several times been represented in the legislature by prostitutes. Yes, you don't need to be reminded of that. But do you know that several prostitutes have held the highest office in this great state? I say it with shame, but it is too true. And if what I read can be relied on, I am afraid also that at least one prostitute has been chief magistrate of this mighty nation. What better have we a right to expect, when we allow our political primaries to be managed by wire-pullers and our elections to be run by prostitutes? The fact is that no honest, law-abiding, self-respecting man has any chance in politics under the prevailing system. Such a man will not stoop to the low tricks and crimes resorted to by the wire-pullers and prostitutes, and therefore, until the public conscience is awakened and educated on the subject, the reign of small men, and bad men, will continue. In fact, if it becomes settled that the people can not, or will not, enforce the salutary laws which I read to you last Sunday, then I say the sooner they are repealed the better; because, as matters now are, the law

simply has the effect of giving the men who have no consciences a decided advantage over those who have. Good men are restrained by the election laws, but bad men are not; and therefore I say again that if we can't enforce the laws we had better repeal them, and thus give good men an equal chance with the bad. Of course poor men would have no chance under the repealed law; but they would have just as much chance then as they do now. Our once proud boast that under our government the poor have an equal chance with the rich is no longer true. The only way, at the present day, for a poor man to figure in politics, or to hold any office of consequence, is to sell himself, body and soul, to some rich man who has use for a tool. I don't need to name to this audience the different tools of this kind that General Humbug has had in the legislature, as well as elsewhere.

But we *can* enforce the law, if we earnestly desire to do so. It will take time, however, and a good deal of hard work, by united action, to root out the giant fungus that has almost destroyed us. I feel certain that this will be done, but in just what way I can not foresee.

It seems to me that the time is ripe for a new political party having for one of its chief *planks* the principle of *fair primaries and honest elections.* Such a party could certainly do much to quicken the public conscience; and, if ably conducted, it would be likely to attract to it the better elements of all other parties. A party composed of such material, and animated by such principles and purposes, most certainly must triumph. I fully expect to live to see

the day (which can not be far distant) when the people, made desperate by being constantly tricked in the primaries, robbed of their birth-rights at the polls, and loaded down with unbearable burdens in all conceivable ways, will finally rise, in divine wrath, and sweep the prostitute system from the earth as with a whirlwind. But experience has shown that such spasmodic reforms, however good and thorough they may be, are seldom permanent. After the job appears to be finished, the people who carried it through return quietly to their ordinary vocations, and, before they are aware of it, the same old evils need reforming again as bad as before.

I would suggest (and nothing more than suggest at this time) two or three remedies, not only to assist in bringing about a reform, but to prevent a backslip after the reform has been accomplished.

(1) Of course, and above all else, a healthy public sentiment must be created and not suffered to die out.

(2) The offenders should be denounced by name in the pulpit and in the public prints; and here I must pause long enough to say a few words in parenthesis, as it were, concerning the Press—the Newspaper Press. I regret to say that, so far as I have been able to see, I have found it, for the most part, thoroughly and corruptly mercenary—especially the political press, outside of a very few of the great newspapers. Money, if administered in the right place and in sufficient amount, will induce almost any of them to argue for or against any proposition, no matter what, or to praise or condemn any man, no matter whom. For money they will publish an ad-

vertisement neatly disguised as a news item, or even as an editorial article. They sometimes justify themselves, I believe, by claiming the same right that the lawyer has to practice his profession for pay. But when the lawyer, in the course of his practice, has occasion to say anything, we know he has been hired to say the best he can for his client, upon all the proved and admitted facts, and he has no opportunity to deceive us. On the other hand, the newspaper man gives or withholds just such facts as he pleases, and he endeavors to give his words greater weight in our minds by concealing from us the fact that he is speaking for a client who has paid his fee. The safest course seems to be to regard *all* newspaper writing as *venal*, and always to exercise our own judgments with reference to the amount of credit that it is entitled to. In ancient times these newspaper writers were called *scribes*, and if we recall what Christ said of them, in his day, we shall see that the enlightening influences of eighteen centuries have made no perceptible impression upon them. I will quote Christ's words: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

(3) I would create a penalty, by statute, of at least one hundred dollars for every offense, to be recovered of the offender, with costs, by, and for the benefit of, the person who first commences a suit therefor. And, as many of the offenders are worthless devils, I would cause the defendant to be closely confined in

work-house or jail at public expense, at hard labor and mean fare, until the judgment duly rendered against him is fully paid—the imprisonment, however, not to exceed one day for each dollar of the judgment, including costs. Such a law as this would place all the guilty parties in the power of the persons with whom unlawful transactions were had, or attempted. It seems to me that very few would take the risks that such a statute would expose them to.

(4) I would change the law so that no man should be qualified, or allowed, to vote unless he produced due proof that he had paid an annual poll-tax of at least five dollars, six months or more previous to the election. A man who had paid this tax would feel an interest in the government that his money was helping to maintain, and he would be far less likely to sell that interest for so trifling a consideration as many now do; and besides that, the price such a tax-payer would be likely to demand (if, indeed, any amount of money could buy his vote) would be so high that not nearly so many of them could be controlled as at present, without largely increasing the corruption fund. A man who has the least spark of true patriotism in his bosom would not feel such a tax to be too high a price to pay for a voice in the government equal with the greatest citizen of his country. And, on the other hand, a man with soul so dead as to be unwilling to pay so small a price for so great a boon will be very properly excluded from intermeddling with affairs in which he feels so little concern. This latter class form a great majority of those who are purchased at the polls. They value their birthright only for the pottage which it brings

them at regular intervals. Such people are unfit to govern either themselves or others. It is beneficence enough to them to give them the blessings of good government without allowing them to defile it, like hogs, by putting their feet into the trough. When we have disposed of this class we have already removed the most troublesome element in the whole problem.

(5) I think, also, that it would be a great safeguard against repeating, ballot-box stuffing, and fraudulent voting in general (to say nothing of vote-buying) if our election districts were reduced in size, so as to include not more than forty or fifty voters within their limits, respectively; and then, I would have the voting all done, completed and certified within the space of one hour, openly, in the presence of all the voters, so that every voter shall positively *know* that his vote has been counted and certified as cast.

REP. The foregoing are only the most salient points picked out of a whole discourse devoted exclusively to the subject. He seemed to cover the entire subject in all its amplitude; yet he many times repeated that what he did *not* know about the subject exceeded by many times what he knew. He said he could only point out the evils he had seen and heard and felt. The subject was not dropped with these two sermons; but a political campaign was in progress during a part of the time I am now trying to bridge over, and he found frequent occasion to mention particular incidents and to condemn or praise the conduct of the persons concerned in them.

Quite an interesting episode occurred one Sunday during this period, which I will relate in as con-

densed a form as possible. Our friend and fellow church-member, George B. Gibson, the lawyer who has already been introduced to the reader, had been nominated by the Republicans as a candidate for the office of county surrogate, which is a judicial office of much importance and responsibility. There is the best reason for saying, in this case, so far as concerns the nomination, that "the office sought the man, and not the man the office." He was nominated because of his superior fitness for the place over all his competitors. Nobody regarded him as a brilliant man; but he had fair capacity, combined with great energy, and he had acquired the reputation among those who knew him best of being the *one* honest lawyer in the county. He resides at Needleton, only two and a half miles below Pinville, on the same side of the river, and he quite early became interested in Uncle Job's new church, as the reader already knows, and that interest had never cooled.

Mr. Badsinner had a nephew living in Pinville by the name of Skillet, who was nominally a lawyer, but whose principal occupation, until within the last year or two, had been drinking whisky and lying around drunk—in the gutter or elsewhere. When not under the influence of drink, he had fair ability, a rather fine address, and was a pretty good speaker—better than the average. When he commenced practice, these qualifications had given him a fair measure of success; but when it came to be noised around, as it soon was, that he had betrayed the interest of some of his clients, that he had greatly overcharged others, that he was thoroughly unreliable and dishonest, those reports, coupled with the un-

fortunate habit I first mentioned, were not long in wrecking a career that had promised well at the start. His name was on the list of "dead-beats" kept by the village merchants, and his Uncle Badsinner had been obliged to furnish him some of the necessaries of life, though refusing to receive him into his own house. Once, it is said, Mr. Skillet had fallen so low that he had become disgustingly filthy and lousy, and Mr. Badsinner had hired a man to strip him naked, burn up his old rags, cut his hair close to his scalp, give him a thorough scrubbing, and dress him up in a new suit which the uncle had provided. At last his dissipation had carried him to the very brink of the grave, and the doctors had told him that one or two more sprees would carry him over, when suddenly he rallied, and, at the time of the episode I am about to describe, he had tasted no liquor for about eighteen months, and in other respects he seemed to be trying to reform. This man, Skillet, Mr. Badsinner resolved should be made surrogate instead of Mr. Gibson, and, with that end in view, he proceeded deliberately to purchase the Democratic nomination for him, which he succeeded in doing, though there were several competitors for the nomination who were infinitely better and cleaner men than Mr. Skillet. Mr. Badsinner, while boasting of his own villainy in buying the nomination for his nephew, exclaimed, with clinched teeth, "*And my money is going to elect him.*" Only a few days after this, the persons Uncle Job calls prostitutes were busy in all parts of the county confidentially imparting the information wherever, they thought it would have weight, that Mr. Gibson was a Free-

thinker and Atheist, etc., and they would add, with great unction, that it would be too bad to have an Infidel elected to *that* office. In short, the same tactics that were practiced on Uncle Job in the spring were put into operation on a larger scale, and for a bigger stake, against Mr. Gibson in the fall. Uncle Job was stung almost to madness by the situation of things, but he felt that he could not speak his mind freely on the subject, in the pulpit, without laying himself open to the charge of preaching partisan politics. He did, however, sometimes briefly allude to the case in a way that nobody could misunderstand. He had been doing so one Sunday afternoon, after which, as the audience was about to be dismissed, a stranger rose and requested the privilege of saying a few words. Now we come to the episode which it has taken me so long to pave the way for.

The stranger appeared to be about forty-five years of age, was tall, rather slim, well dressed, and his manner and style indicated the orthodox clergyman. At first his words were very slow and deliberately measured, but, before he had been standing three minutes, they were pouring from his mouth in torrents, and his clear, ringing voice seemed electrical. I confess that I was so far entranced as to forget my business, and so the only report I have of the first half of this speech is one that I wrote out from memory immediately after its delivery. He spoke about twenty minutes, using frequently the names of God, Christ, and other phrases customary in his profession—most of which I omit. He said, in substance:

STRANGER. Circumstances beyond my control have compelled me to spend a portion of yesterday and

the whole of to-day in this beautiful village. I was at first disposed to complain of my ill-fortune in not getting sooner started on my homeward journey; but now I thank my God for so framing the circumstances as to bring me into the midst of this people at this time.

REP. Here Uncle Job politely interrupted, and invited the speaker to the platform. The invitation was accepted, with thanks, and the speaker continued:

STRANGER. When I rose to speak I had no thought of coming to the desk, but it *does* seem better to *face* an audience. I was saying that I thanked God for this opportunity to be with you. I greatly wonder that such a movement as this seems to be has not been smelt out and written up for the press by the keen-scented and lynx-eyed reporters. I never heard of it until yesterday, at the hotel where I am stopping, and what I learned there was not altogether of a friendly nature. I called in at some of the business places, and made inquiries, from which I learned that very many good people speak in the highest terms of this shepherd and his flock. I determined, in the end, to take advantage of my opportunity and attend one of your meetings, and see and hear for myself what manner of people you are, and that I have done so is what I thank God for. The discourse I have listened to here was one of remarkable originality and strength, and I have learned from it many things that I did not know before. Every remark appeared to have a practical application to every-day life, either among people in general, or among this people in particular. I am not disposed, however, to

go so far in my commendation as to say there may not be a lack here of one or more of the essential elements of Christianity; but, so far as your professions and practice go (according to my best information), I find nothing but good, and certainly I will not, and can not, condemn anything good. I may say, I think, that you have here an excellent quality and a goodly quantity, of the raw material necessary for the building of a Christian church, and I sincerely pray that your minds and hearts may be quickened and moved into the higher walks of Christian life by the spirit and the potency of the Living God.

But I rose simply to speak of a particular matter which was mentioned in the discourse this afternoon, and although, when at home, I am not accustomed to discuss such topics on the Lord's day, yet I feel that under the circumstances I shall be forgiven if I follow the lead of my good brother here. I have learned since landing in your town yesterday that my old war-comrade, George B. Gibson, is a candidate for office in your county, and I have learned with indignation that some well-meaning people feel prejudiced against him because of his independency in religious matters. I would to God that my friend Gibson could see things as I see them; but perhaps God has willed that all men shall not be of one mind in the matter of religious belief, any more than they are in other matters. At all events, I know Mr. Gibson, and he knows me, as few men have known each other; and I solemnly declare that I never knew a man in all my life so true, so brave, so unflinchingly devoted to the right, as he sees it, so ready and willing to sacrifice him-

self, if need be, in the cause of truth, as George B. Gibson. It was my fortune to serve with him under Grant in those dark days around Petersburg in 1864. Ah! my friends, those were indeed "times that tried men's souls." He was first lieutenant, and I was second, of our company of infantry. He had seen service before, but I was green and so was the captain, likewise the men. Mr. Gibson and I were constantly together, day and night. We ate together, slept together, and during our waking hours we were seldom separated either in labor or in leisure. Both had strong religious convictions, and many and many were the discussions we had on religious topics. I had commenced study for the ministry, and was as orthodox then as I claim to be to-day. He was skeptical—refusing to accept anything for truth that did not comport strictly with the principles of natural logic as he understood them; but while he always held to his views with great tenacity, he uniformly treated me and my views with the highest respect, and I entertained the same respect for him and his views; and I say now, what I felt then, and what I have always believed, that his views were inspired by impulses, convictions, motives, as pure and holy as my own. While we were lying in the trenches, exposed to bullets every time we raised our heads, we frequently talked of death and of the providence of God in shielding some while allowing others to suffer. I believed, and still believe, that God might (and *would* in a proper case) interpose to preserve from danger those who sought him in prayer, believing. But Mr. Gibson thought that no invisible power existed in the universe that

could turn aside a bullet or cannon ball. Or, he said, if such power *did* exist in the shape of electricity, or some similar agent, it would act as dumbly and unintelligently as a tree or stone, and it would shield alike the just and the unjust, as experience had amply shown. I frankly confess that my religion did not endow me with a courage superior to his—that, indeed, would have been impossible. At length we were called upon to gird up our loins and charge with the bayonet against those impregnable walls that our enemies had built about the beleaguered city. Ah! my friends, if anything will try a man's metal, that will do it. Where was the captain? *Weighed in the balance, and found wanting!* Lieutenant Gibson, dauntless, peerless in demeanor, marshaled the company in line of battle. We had in our company a number of sinners of the variety known in the army as "dead-beats." The army was cursed with them, though I learn that most of them are now drawing pensions. If half of them had been hung at the time for cowardice, as they ought to have been, the government would have saved millions of dollars by the operation, to say nothing of the great advantage to the army that such a course would have produced. These dead-beats were always well enough to eat a full ration, and to sleep soundly at night, and usually they would manage to perform, in a perfunctory sort of way, the ordinary routine duties of a soldier's life in camp, or wherever no danger was threatening; but when the time of need came—that trying hour for which alone soldiers were necessary—these men would become suddenly ailing with all conceivable aches and pains and

pangs. Some deliberately shot off their own fingers or toes. One, to my knowledge, swallowed a great quid of tobacco at the critical moment, and others had excuses too numerous and too disgusting to mention. At the time I am speaking of, these sinners in our company began their usual "playing-off," as the soldiers called it, and I remember distinctly Lieutenant Gibson's coming to me, and saying in a low but very determined tone these words: "I have resolved that our dead-beats shall face the bullets *this* time, or die on the spot at my hands, and I hope you will assist me all you can." By dint of many threats and thrusts we succeeded in getting most of our men into the little ravine where the regiment halted just before the charge. We also managed a little later to get them formed (minus two or three more dead-beats who had dodged us in spite of our vigilance) in battle-array on the bank just outside of the ravine where we were ordered to lie down. Just then the enemy discovered our intention, and began a brisk fire with all arms, which mainly passed over our backs, but so low as to flatten us all out pretty thin. The dead-beats, who were still with us, were taken by surprise, as they had not supposed danger was so near, and now they began to squirm, and some of them to mutter, and to threaten to crawl back into the ravine. At this Lieutenant Gibson rose to his feet, and by words and gestures raged like a lion. He paced back and forth, just in rear of the company, unmindful of the deadly missiles that seemed to leave no chance for his escape. He repeated to the men the resolution I have already related, and he coupled it with other

language hardly proper to repeat here, but which convinced the cowards of his entire sincerity. How well I remember turning my head, as I lay flat on my face, and looking at my comrade as he strode up and down in his rage, and I confess to this day that I believe I should have been a coward myself had it not been for the thrilling conduct of that undaunted hero on that dreadful occasion. Soon the order came to rise, and charge with a yell at the double-quick, and brave men obeyed, but the cowards did not stir, or, if they moved at all, it was only a feint. Lieutenant Gibson began at the same moment to yell "Forward!" and to slash the prostrate cowards with his sword. I can hear his voice yet ringing like a silver trumpet high above the din of battle, commanding them to "up and on!" Almost instantly he perceived that he was being left behind with the cowards instead of going to battle with the brave, and so he bounded forward, and was soon in the midst of the charging column, yelling at every breath, "Forward! forward! forward!" The air was full of "chained thunderbolts and hail of iron globes," and in less than twenty minutes the battle at that point had spent its force, and two-thirds of our brave little band lay dead and wounded on the bloody hill. But the dead-beats—what of them? Not one was injured, except by self-inflicted wounds and bruises and thrusts from Lieutenant Gibson's sword. Strange to relate, the lieutenant himself came out without even the smell of fire about his garments. Your humble servant received a bruise which was too slight to disable him, and yet was too serious to laugh at. The next day, as soon as we

could muster the dead-beats at the rear, Lieutenant Gibson ordered them all under arrest, and directed me to remain with them, and to punish them most severely, while he led the rest of the company to the front. I ordered the villains to fall into line, and after giving them a pretty vigorous talking to, I questioned them separately to see what defenses they would try to make for themselves. Each was ready with a transparent lie which would have been more or less satisfactory if true. I knew them so well, however, that I didn't believe a word they said. At length I came to the most incorrigible wretch of the whole batch. He was a worthless vagabond and thief, as well as coward. "Well," said I, "what have you to say for yourself?" "Well, Lieutenant," said he, looking at me with an impudent leer, "I felt as though I couldn't conscientiously go into battle under the command of that damned Infidel." May God forgive me if I did wrong, but I say the truth—that answer put murder in my heart, and I smote the villain a powerful blow on the head with the edge of my sword, with intent to slay him then and there. I did not quite succeed, however, for the by-standers interfered, and prevented me from repeating the blow. The brigade commander (who was a regular army officer), on hearing the facts, exonerated me, and rebuked the by-standers. I have told more of this than I intended, and more than was necessary. I only wanted to get at this miserable creature's excuse for his cowardice. I was reminded of it by the fact, gathered from my brother's discourse, that other degraded men pretend to have conscientious scruples against *voting* for Mr. Gibson.

When you find the devil rebuking sin, be not deceived by it, but look sharply all around, and you will surely find somewhere a far greater sin that he is endeavoring to hide by false pretences. Depend upon it, my friends, you have no better man in your county—there is none better in the State of New York—than George B. Gibson. He'll never flinch from his duty—no man can bribe him, nor sway him by other improper influence.

I beg pardon for my interruption, and I thank you heartily for your attention to what I have said, and I pray that God may shower his divine blessing upon all your good works. Amen!

REP. The audience applauded the stranger at the close of his speech, and a number went forward and shook his hand and learned his name and residence. Uncle Job thanked him warmly and invited him home to tea.

Extracts from this speech were printed on slips and circulated throughout the county as campaign documents by Mr. Gibson's friends. Mr. Gibson was not present at the meeting, nor had he been in town for two days. His enemies insisted that this was conclusive evidence that he had *hired* the stranger to come here and make the speech, and that he had stayed away so as to have it appear that he knew nothing about it. They said nobody knew whether the stranger was a preacher or one of Gibson's brother Infidels; and as for the war story, they said that could not be true, or they would have heard of it before. This incident happened only a few days before the election, so there was but little time to investigate on either side. But Mr. Badsinner did not

want to investigate, for lies would serve his purpose, and they were cheaper and more quickly made than an investigation. On election day flaming handbills were posted at every public place, signed by the Hon. Mr. Bottle, General Humbug, Mr. Badsinner, and others of that ilk, stating, in substance, that a careful investigation had revealed the fact that the stranger in question was a notorious Infidel and blackguard, by the name of John Whittlesey, of Akron, Ohio, and that, instead of being an officer in the army, he had run away to Canada to escape the draft. This furnished a number of texts for Mr. Badsinner's hirelings, and, with voices stimulated by whisky, they sounded all the changes that could be made of the original, and invented many striking additions thereto.

Whether these allegations influenced anybody's vote is not known; but the great hue and cry kept up about it all day served to divert the attention of honest men from the bribery that was slyly carried on from morning till night. Mr. Skillet was declared elected by the narrow majority of seventy-six. He had his strongest vote where he was *least* known—Mr. Gibson, where he was *best* known. I will add, in closing this chapter, that, after the election, we, of the Church of Practical Religion, made careful inquiry among Mr. Gibson's war comrades, and elsewhere, and the stranger's story was verified in every particular, and many other interesting particulars were added. We were also satisfied, beyond all doubt, that Mr. Gibson had no agency in bringing the stranger here, nor in causing him to make his speech—in fact, that he knew nothing about either,

until it was past—and it follows, of course, that his absence had no connection with what transpired.

It should be further added that Mr. Gibson took and maintained the same determined stand against the unlawful use of money that Uncle Job had previously taken, as told in a former chapter. Mr. Gibson is a man of property, and could easily have secured the office if he had been willing to buy it. Many of the prostitutes really appeared to have a warm sympathy for him, and to sincerely wish that he might be elected, and these pleaded earnestly with him for money to use in his behalf; but their overtures were invariably spurned. His friends organized and worked zealously for him in Pinville and Needleton; but in other parts of the county, no efficient efforts being made in his behalf, he only received the votes of the unpurchasable and unhoodwinkable members of his own party.

One of the meanest things done against him was to hire an old fellow named Crohaw, who had been three times to state prison, and was as odious all over the county as Benedict Arnold could have been, to go about among religious people cheering and yelling for Mr. Gibson, and to give as his reason therefor that he and Mr. Gibson were brother Atheists.

CHAPTER XVII.

PENSION FRAUDS—HOW THE GOVERNMENT IS SWINDLED —METHODS OF CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

REP. On the next Sunday after the episode described in the last chapter, Uncle Job referred to the statement of the stranger that most of the army dead-beats were now drawing pensions, and said :

SAWYER. It seems to be a fact admitted by all good soldiers of the late war that all of the persons who were most worthless as soldiers are now either drawing pensions, or are prosecuting claims therefor. I was talking on this subject only the other day with a soldier who left a leg on the field of Antietam. I asked him how much pension he was drawing. He said he almost felt ashamed to own that he drew *any* pension, and, when I asked his reason, he replied that so many of the men that he despised as cowards and slinks while in the service were now on the pension rolls, that it made him feel as though he was in bad company. He said no ordinary disability could induce him to ask or receive a pension for that reason. I hinted that possibly he was too severe on his old comrades. This excited him to a high pitch, and he began to name over a large number of "dead-beats," as he called them, who had always "played

off," as he expressed it, and yet had obtained pensions on perjured testimony. He named one who, he said, had a bad rupture, or *hernia*, before the war, but who had managed to conceal it from the examining surgeon, and thereby got into the service, when he no longer tried to conceal it. He remained in hospital for a year and was discharged from there. He is now a pensioner, claiming to have been ruptured by slipping and falling while on drill when first enlisted. Another had managed in a similar way with a fever sore, and had been equally successful. A third had purposely shot off his own finger while on picket, which was well known to two of his companions and believed by everybody at the time; yet he obtained a pension by making it appear that he received his injury from a shot fired by the enemy's pickets; and so on He claims through a long list. also that large numbers are drawing pensions who were never injured at all in any manner, and who are now perfectly well. One claims to have contracted heart-disease in the service; another, disease of the lungs, or consumption; another, rheumatism; another, liver-complaint; and still another, kidney difficulty; and so forth, and so forth. He said a man who had really contracted any one of these complaints twenty or more years ago, ought, in the ordinary course of those diseases, to have died long ago; but they still linger, and seem likely to do so until carried away by extreme old age. I can certify that several of those mentioned, who were personally known to me, have every appearance of enjoying robust health. Indeed, in several cases mentioned by him, it was a great surprise to me to learn th

the men were drawing pensions at all. I asked how the fellows managed to get the medical examiner to certify favorably as to their disability. He said that part of the business was no more troublesome than any other part. Nearly all the medical examiners have a friendly leaning towards the claimants. They give the soldier the benefit of all doubts. Then, again, many of the examiners receive their appointment through the influence of certain claim agents, and they generally do the work to the satisfaction of their creators. Furthermore, he said he had no doubt that some of the examiners could be and had been bribed to make favorable reports. He knew some of these dead-beats who had privately boasted of carrying their point in that way. But, said my friend, suppose an examiner to be incorruptible and unmoved by anything but cold facts, and so reports adversely on a case; the claimant, by representing to the commissioner of pensions that the examiner is an enemy of his, or is otherwise prejudiced against him, can obtain an order to go before another examiner, and if this fails again, he can try still another, and so on, until he finally reaches an examiner who falls into the snare of flattery, imposture, or corruption. When I asked how these rascals worked it to get the affidavits of their officers and the army surgeons, my one-legged friend answered that, in the first place, the officers, for the most part, at this distant day, are more willing to forgive the past than to antagonize any of their old associates. He said he had recently arraigned his own captain for assisting a man to get a pension on the ground of kidney trouble. The captain explained that it was twenty years since the

soldier was discharged, and he had no recollection about the matter, except the general impression that the man had not been a first-class soldier. The captain said the soldier had come to him with an affidavit already prepared for him (the captain) to sign and swear to, together with a similar one sworn to by himself. The soldier asserted, with great assurance, that the facts were as stated in the affidavit, and expressed great surprise that the captain should have forgotten them. The captain said the fellow seemed so frank and honest about it that he (the captain) supposed the blankness of his own mind was wholly owing to the lapse of time and failure of memory, so he signed and swore as requested, and thought no more about it. My friend said he believed such cases were very common. But suppose, said he, that the officer refuses to make the affidavit, the next thing he knows the claim agent will visit him with an affidavit, prepared for him to swear to, stating that he has no recollection of the vital facts in the case, and then giving some plausible reason, more or less true, for his want of recollection—such as absence from the company, at the time fixed, on detached service, or in hospital, etc. Such an affidavit as this from the officer paves the way for the affidavits of two private soldiers as substitutes for the oath of an officer. Then the dead-beats are in shape to help one another. My friend says he has known cases where they have formed themselves into clubs or rings for mutual assistance in this nefarious business—each being ready to swear to anything required to help his comrades through. A further trouble that puts the government to disad-

vantage, said my friend, lies in the fact that some of the officers are as eager to obtain fraudulent pensions for themselves as the other villains are. He says, moreover, that he knows an ex-regimental surgeon who, since the war, has become so perfectly besotted and poverty-stricken, through the excessive use of whisky and morphine, that any soldier of his old regiment, by making him a personal visit, talking over old times, buying him a few drinks of whisky, and making him a present of ten dollars, can get him to swear to any affidavit asked for. My friend also made still further allegations, to the effect that forgery is a very common resort for these scoundrels when other means fail them.

These statements of my soldier friend, if true, or half true, disclose a most deplorable state of things. He says, judging from his own observation, and assuming the same condition throughout the country, he is convinced that fully one-third of the money annually drawn from the government for pensions is so drawn by fraud. Some remedy should be promptly applied to check so great a drain as this. Of course untold millions have already gone beyond our reach, but that should not deter us from speedily repairing the breach through which it escaped. In my judgment, the prevailing practice, adopted and sanctioned by the government, for proving pension claims, is a standing invitation to, and premium upon, fraud and perjury. Everything is done in the dark, and all on one side. Nobody cross-examines the witnesses. Even the officers who administer the oaths have no knowledge of the contents of the papers to which they certify. Why is this so, and why has it not

been remedied before? Because our senators and representatives in Congress stand in idiotic dread of offending the soldiers. It's all bosh! The good and brave soldiers who bore the brunt of the war in the fore-front of battle will welcome such a remedy with gladness—in fact they are, and long have been, *demanding* it. No good and faithful soldier, whether entitled to a pension or not, will object to any reasonable safeguard against fraud. Depend upon it, my friends, that any ex-soldier who *does* object to such safeguards is a fit object for suspicion.

There are many ways in which the present practice might be changed for the better—indeed, almost any change would be an improvement—but I venture to suggest one which would cost but little more than the present method, as it would relieve from duty a large number of salaried men now employed in Washington. I would divide the whole United States into pension districts large enough to make business for two pension judges the year round. I would appoint two pension judges for each district, one of whom should be a well-trained lawyer and the other a skilful physician and surgeon; and I would allow them a reasonable salary, besides expenses; and they should also be provided with a stenographer. I would make it the duty of these judges to hold a duly advertised court, at least once a year, in every county in their respective districts, in which court no counsel on either side should be required or allowed. I would require the judges to act with entire impartiality between the claimants and the government, to make every practicable endeavor to get at the exact truth and justice of every

case, and to make such decision therein as truth and justice require. At the first session of such court in every county, I would require every pensioner and claimant for pension residing in the county to appear personally before the court, unless excused for good cause shown. I would make it the duty of the court to make such physical examination of the pensioners and claimants as might be necessary to a correct understanding of their condition, and also to examine them and such witnesses (*pro and con*) as live in the county, under oath, touching the facts upon which the pension, or claim therefor, is founded. All witnesses, on either side, living in another county, should be directed to go before the court in the county where they respectively reside and there be examined by the court—all examinations previously taken being transmitted to that county for use by the court in examining such witnesses—and when the proof is all taken it should be returned to the court where the claimant resides, for final decision. The government should also employ an agent in each district to hunt up witnesses and other evidence in opposition to unjust claims. I would also require a "calendar," as the lawyers call it, to be made up and published in two newspapers of opposite politics in every county, at least four weeks before the sitting of the court in that county, containing the name of every claimant and showing briefly the ground of his claim. Many other details would be required to put the machinery into working order, but I need not pursue the matter further here. If some such practice as this had been established at the close of the late war, I believe the very publicity of the proceedings, to say

nothing of any other improvement, would have saved hundreds of millions to the government before this time.

But shall we lie still and do nothing until Congress amends the practice? By no means! The mutterings of my wooden-legged friend are all right so far as they go—everybody should talk right out loud about every case of fraud within his knowledge—but that is not enough. The facts, with names of witnesses, should be written out and sent to the commissioner of pensions. I have heard that such complaints are sometimes ignored, but that is no excuse for our failure to do our duty. If we know facts that we fail to report, the responsibility is on us for any wrong that we could possibly set right; but if we make due report, then we shift the responsibility from ourselves to the government. I think we do too little growling and too little reporting of information. Let us reform!

As the end of the first year since the birth of the Church of Practical Religion began to draw near, the members discussed from time to time, among themselves in private conversation and at their business meetings, the question of building or buying a meeting-house exclusively for their own use. Our membership was now considerably the largest of any church in the village, and many of our members felt not a little pride in the fact that they had conquered a place for themselves in the community, and had become, to all appearances, thoroughly and permanently established. Nevertheless, Uncle Job was opposed to any exhibition of pride or strength, al-

though he acknowledged that we had been bearing pretty heavily upon Brother Benson in using his hall so long for nothing, and, besides, he thought a building could be designed expressly for our use that would suit us better than the hall. He had been thinking, he said, of one of the roller skating rinks that had apparently about had its day as a rink. In fact, he had ascertained that the best one (near the central part of the village) could be bought for two thousand dollars, with the land on which it stood. He advocated buying this rink and fixing it up to suit our own convenience. He said we should need more and better seats than the rink now contained, and that he had been studying on a plan by which the floor could be covered with settees so arranged and secured together in blocks that when we required the room for festive occasions the several blocks of settees could be all drawn up to the ceiling by pulleys, thus clearing the floor in a few minutes, or arranging it again for our Sunday meetings, with as little trouble. He thought, he said, there could be no manifestation of pride in the ownership of this humble edifice, and as for our strength, we couldn't hide that if we tried, and he didn't know as we ought to try to hide it; but he thought we ought to be careful to do nothing which seemed like boasting of our growth or strength. Goliath, he said, had done some boasting once, and a little fellow had come out and knocked him on the head. That story, whether truth or fiction, was chokefull of human nature, he said, and we should learn wisdom from Goliath's experience.

While this matter was under discussion, and had

been bruited to some extent outside the Church, a Mr. Fistula made application for membership in the Church, and accompanied his application with an offer of five thousand dollars to aid in building a new church edifice. Mr. Fistula took pains to say, in connection with his proposed gift, that it was not intended to influence in the smallest degree the action of the Church in approving or rejecting his application for membership. The money could be accepted and his application rejected. A full report of the debate on these questions in the business meeting would be very interesting reading; but in the interest of brevity I must be content, and so must the reader, with a plain narrative of the most prominent facts.

Mr. Fistula's first appearance in Pinville was in the year 1862, in the very midst of the war, when he leased a place which had previously been a low groggery, and converted it into a *hotel*, as he styled it, but it was still a groggery as low as before, and in addition Mr. Fistula made it a house of ill-fame of the worst character. Many and many were the stories of robberies and other kinds of foul play that took place there during and just after the war, when so many silly soldiers had more money than they knew what to do with. It was darkly hinted that more than one man who went in there at night was never seen or heard of afterward outside. Some efforts were made by the police and by the courts and juries to suppress the house, but the house and its keeper had such a very bad reputation that the public sympathy was not very strong in favor of anyone who would be so foolish or wicked as to

enter there. At all events, the business was not seriously interfered with, and it grew and flourished "like a weed on a dung pile," as Uncle Job said. The business was so profitable that its proprietor, who had nothing to begin with, was able to buy the building and furniture at the end of the first year, and his prosperity continued so great that at the end of the second year he bought and equipped another building in a distant part of the village, and started another man as mean as himself in the same kind of business. The business continued to flourish in both places, and soon Mr. Fistula had money to loan, and in five years from his first venture in Pinville he began to be recognized as one of the wealthy men of the village, and in another five years he began to feel that his business was too degrading for a man of his wealth and influence to be engaged in, personally, and so he rented out both of his brothels to two men to whom such business was congenial pastime. Mr. Fistula then purchased some bank stock, and became a director; bought and furnished a splendid residence on the most fashionable street in town, and suddenly developed into a man of excellent manners, fine dress, and exemplary conduct. Up to that time he, as well as his wife and children, had lived in a brothel during their whole residence in Pinville, and he still owned and drew monthly revenues from the houses and business before mentioned. It is needless to follow the family through their up-hill struggle of many years to gain admission into the society of respectable people. In short, there were many so uncharitable as to affirm that his application for membership in the Church

of Practical Religion was, in effect, only a request to the Church to galvanize his old stains with a shining silver plate, and that his offer of money was intended as a good, sound consideration for the job.

In the business meeting, at which these questions were settled, many jokes were cracked, and many hearty laughs were indulged in, at the expense of Mr. Fistula; but it must suffice to say that not a solitary member was in favor of admitting him into the Church, though there was a difference of opinion as to the propriety of accepting his gift. After many had spoken for and against —

SAWYER. My brethren, it seems to me that the principle upon which you have already virtually decided the main question in this case ought very quickly to dispose of the subordinate question in the same way. I have heard no voice raised here in favor of receiving Mr. Fistula into our fellowship. Why is this? I suppose it to be because he has not in reality reformed; that he has neither repented, nor done works meet for repentance. There used to be a saying among the Connecticut Yankees that you might as well eat the devil as to drink his broth. Now, in this case, having rejected the devil as unfit for food, shall we, nevertheless, proceed to drink his broth as though it were wholesome? This money is a part of the fruit of years of sin. I know some of you have argued truly that the money is inanimate, cold, and unfeeling, and has taken no intelligent part in the sin; but we must look beyond such things. If we accept this money, we say to the world that in our eyes ill-gotten money is as good as any, which seems to me to amount almost to an indorsement—

an affirmative approval—of the evil practices by which the money was won, and I am sure none of us would knowingly do that. Suppose we accept this gift, knowing, as we do, the methods by which it was gathered together, can we ever again consistently condemn those methods? It is regarded as a truism among mankind that the partaker is as bad as the thief. How can we accept this gift without lowering ourselves, in a spiritual sense, not only to the level of Mr. Fistula, but also to the level of those instruments of his whose debauchery has been the means of his wealth? What good can we do with this money, if we accept it, that will not be far overbalanced by the evil of a seeming approval on our part of the processes employed in accumulating it? We can not effectively condemn with words what we at the same time commend by our acts; but all evil should be condemned by both voice and action, and no chance left for doubt as to our sincerity.

Again, some of you have alleged, as though it were a crushing argument, that a case was never known where a church has rejected a donation simply because it was the product of sin. I do not know whether this assertion is true or not; but it is enough for us to be reminded that this church is not governed by precedent, but by the try-square. If, however, the assertion be true, it may be the reason, or *a* reason, why the church has never made more headway against sin in the past. It is impossible to serve both God and Mammon.

Some of the words spoken of rich men by one of the great reformers of past times have been hard to understand, especially where he says that it shall be

hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, and in another place where a rich man is directed to sell what he has and give it to the poor. I conceive that Christ was not well reported concerning these sayings. In the nature of things, he could not have intended his remarks to apply to all men of property, but both of the remarks just mentioned doubtless had reference to a man (well known by the reformer and those about him) who had acquired wealth unjustly. Suppose, if you can, that Christ had said these things of, or to, Mr. Fistula; then we could all see perfect fitness in them. Hence I say the reporter neglected to mention collateral facts essential to a correct understanding of the teaching.

I have heretofore, in speaking of repentance, tried to express my idea that effective repentance for a sin—repentance that brings pardon—must be evidenced by a surrender of the entire fruits of the sin, and a sincere, earnest, energetic effort to repair the wrong done. By fruits of sin I mean here, of course, only those advantages which accrue to the sinner from his sin, and not those awful consequences which, in Mr. Fistula's case, will follow his victims for unnumbered generations. Much of the wrong done by Mr. Fistula is past repair, and therefore I do not see how he can ever be entirely pardoned by any just judge here or hereafter. But he can sell what he has, and give to the poor, and he can also cease to do evil, and learn to do well. When he has done all this, in good faith, it will be our duty to render him every assistance in our power; but until that time my vote shall be cast to reject both him and his corrupt offering.

REP. Immediately after this speech a separate vote was taken on each proposition. On the application for membership the vote was unanimous in the negative. On the question of the gift, while there was no vote in favor of accepting it, yet there were a number of those, who had argued for its acceptance, who refrained from voting. They manifested no ill-feeling, but rather seemed to have been convinced against their will, and yet lacked the grace to frankly admit it.

The sequel is soon told—a fact which Uncle Job said privately was most lamentable for the cause of righteousness. Soon after it became publicly known that the Church of Practical Religion had declined to receive either Mr. Fistula or his money, he was visited by a committee from the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is necessary to say that this society had recently overdone themselves by going heavily in debt to build a costly church edifice beyond their needs, as well as beyond their financial strength. Outsiders do not know what negotiations took place between the committee and Mr. Fistula, nor (except by inference) do they know the object of the said visit, but they *do* know that in as short a time afterwards as decent appearances would permit, Mr. Fistula became a full-fledged member of the M. E. Church, and about the same time his money lightened the burden of that church to the extent of three thousand dollars.

There was a good deal of guessing and discussing over the fact that Mr. Fistula offered two thousand dollars more for the indorsement he *sought* than he paid for the indorsement he *got*. Some thought that

this difference represented the relative values of the two indorsements, in his estimation, while others argued that he probably valued one as highly as the other, and that the less price paid to the Methodists was only an exhibition of thrift in taking advantage of the market and buying what he wanted as cheaply as possible. The question remains unsolved to date.

While the subject just disposed of was still fresh in the public mind, several of us were in Uncle Job's office one day engaged in general conversation on various topics, when all of a sudden—

Mr. Nash. Uncle Job, why don't you pitch into some of the other churches of this place and arraign them sharply for their rotten constituencies? You profess to believe in that method of reform work, and you have practiced it pretty generally all around except as against the churches. Now, look at the —— church! Mr. A. is the king-pin in that crowd; and what of him? He has sucked the blood of widows and orphans until he has become enormously rich. I never heard of his doing a single commendable act; but the worst of it is that, as everybody knows, legal proceedings were once commenced against him for incest; and, while nobody doubted his guilt, his wealth secured a compromise, and the matter was hushed up, so far as actual publicity is concerned, and he continues to pay his regular dues and retains his standing in the church.

Then take Mr. B., Mr. C., Mr. D., Mr. E., Mr. F., Mr. G., Mr. H., Mr. I., Mr. J., and Mr. K.—every solitary one of them took advantage of the bankrupt act under circumstances that leave no room to doubt they not only cheated their creditors, but added per-

jury to fraud. Every solitary one of them, after getting through bankruptcy, suddenly became the owner of a large property, through transfers from relatives and friends who had been hiding it from the creditors to whom it belonged. Some of these men belonged to the church before their bankruptcy, and some have joined since; but all are members now and in excellent standing. They occupy the best seats, and they *run* the church. The really good men in that church have but little voice in its affairs.

Then take the —— church. In some respects I don't think it is as bad as the one I have just described; but, to say nothing of anything else, just take out of that church the men who are interested, directly or indirectly, in what we call the *whisky business*, and that shop would be obliged to suspend business for want of funds. There are only two men in that church able to pay a decent pew-rent who are not so interested. Just think! Two owners of distilleries; two owners of malt-houses; three owners of breweries; three wholesale liquor dealers, not already included; five owners of hotels, saloons, and *holes* where hell-fire is sold; and nine whose principal business is the selling of liquor at retail. Great God! Why don't that church sink? No wonder their pastor preached a most impudent, outrageous, devilish sermon against those noble, self-sacrificing women when they tried to check the ravages of rum by the crusade! He served his clients then like a well-paid attorney.

Then there is the Methodist church. But I needn't go into particulars about them; for they have just

shown what they are made of by selling themselves to old Fistula for a mess of dirty pot-pie.

The Unitarians are the best of the whole lot, and I won't try to pick any flaws with them; but these others—Oh, what a furious rattling you could make among the dry-bones if you would only drag your rake among them! Why don't you do it?

REP. Mr. Nash got quite excited during his talk, and spoke with a loud, high-pitched voice, and very rapidly. One not accustomed to his eccentric manners would have supposed he was very angry about something, or at somebody—perhaps, at the person he was chiefly addressing; but all knew him intimately, and listened respectfully to his speech—two or three occasionally smiling at his vehemence, and one interrupting once to remind him that none of the party was deaf. At the close of this little speech—

SAWYER. While I am not, from personal knowledge, able to unqualifiedly indorse all the charges you make, yet, from general repute, I can not say that you have exaggerated anything. In fact, you have by no means told all; but you have jumped, as it were, from headland to headland without following the crooks and turns that lie between. I fully realize, I think, the awful condition of things that you have so forcibly depicted. It was this realization, above all things else, that moved me to inaugurate the project which, down to this point, has succeeded so gloriously; and, with that recollection still in mind, I must say that I regard your question as entirely pertinent and proper, and so I will answer it as best I can.

In the first place, I have never yet seen the way

clear, nor felt that the proper time had arrived. I shall not undertake now to answer for the future, but shall hold myself free to do whatever my judgment and conscience point out as my duty for every hour as it comes. But I may say that I have sometimes thought that, perhaps, the course I have been pursuing was better than the one you suggest. It is an old saying that actions speak louder than words, and it has been my aim, in part, to point out the weaknesses of the old churches, and thus endeavor to reform them, by setting before them our own good example—conspicuously in contrast with the unpleasant state of things you have described, and I hope also in some other respects. If we continue in the future to conduct ourselves as well as we have thus far, I think the world will discover whatever differences there may be between the Church of Practical Religion and other churches without having to be told of them.

Then, there is a great body of good people in all of the old churches—people who are thoroughly awake to the evils you point out, but who have been borne down and overshadowed by the bad element—and these good people I do not wish to estrange or antagonize by seeming to strike at *them*, or at the *church* of which they are members. On the contrary, it is my desire to encourage, to stimulate them to rise above the corrupt cliques that now control them, and to reform their organizations from the inside. You know they profess, as we do, to be laboring for the betterment of the world, and I deem it far wiser to try to bring them into line with us than to so maneuver as to array them against us. How long

this policy is to be followed must be determined by circumstances and the developments of time.

REP. It may be said here, briefly, though outside of my general purpose, that, not long after the election at which Mr. Gibson was defeated, in response to a considerable demand in Needleton, he organized in that village a Church of Practical Religion, in all respects similar to the one in Pinville, and he was duly installed as its pastor. At this writing Mr. Gibson's church is flourishing grandly, and he is developing into a preacher of no ordinary power.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNCLE JOB DISCOURSES UPON CHRIST, SPIRIT, AND THE RESURRECTION, BESIDES PRACTICAL MATTERS.

REP. From time to time, Uncle Job filled an entire afternoon service with the reading of one of Shakspere's dramas, in an abridged form. His abridgment was produced by expunging all of those considerable portions of the author's work which have little or no interest to the average mind, and substituting therefor brief summaries in prose containing the material substance of the expunged portions, together with any other matter deemed necessary to connect and explain the portions not expunged nor abridged. These abridgements were carefully written out and pasted in their proper places in the volume from which Uncle Job read. The design was to preserve all the beauty and grandeur of Shakspere's conception and expression, while discarding, to the fullest possible extent those portions which Uncle Job called "mere lumber." Besides these condensations, he also "modernized the text," as he phrased it, of the remaining portions. That is, all obsolete or doubtful words were replaced by well-understood words in current use, and sometimes Shakspere's phraseology was slightly altered, when the author's

thought could be rendered more clear thereby without impairing the majesty and beauty of his diction. All these changes are noted in the volume aforesaid, so that the reader reads right along as though he were reading the original text.

Down to this writing, we have had rendered in this way the following plays: "Julius Cæsar," "Henry the Eighth," "The Merchant of Venice," "Macbeth," and "Hamlet." Uncle Job is an excellent reader, and it is a rich treat to hear him read one of his abridgments. He seldom consumes more than an hour and a half in reading an entire play, thus abridged, and I have failed to discover thus far that anything of real value has been left out. The idea has already entered my head to beg Uncle Job's permission to publish his abridged edition of Shakspere when he shall have extended his work so as to embrace all of the more popular dramas. I feel sure that all whose knowledge of Shakspere is yet to be acquired will feel grateful for so great an assistant and time-saver.

In one of his preludes:

SAWYER. Somebody has sent up a note alluding to my speaking of Christ the other day as the *Great Reformer*, and then the writer asks, "Do you really believe that such a man as Christ is described to have been ever lived?" The writer takes pains to add emphatically his own disbelief. Now, I can't answer this question by Yes or No. I do not believe that any man was ever the son of God in any other or larger sense than all men are sons of God. But expurgate from the story of Christ all the miraculous

and the absurd, and we still have left one of the grandest characters in literature. It matters not to me whether Christ was a real personage or the invention of some unknown writer of fiction. If the latter alternative be assumed as true, then I think the man, whoever he was, who conceived, created, and delineated the character of Jesus Christ must necessarily have contained within himself all the elements of goodness, gentleness, charity, simplicity, sublimity, greatness, and grandeur that he put into the character of his creature. In other words, the creature could not excel, in any respect, its creator—on the principle that a fountain cannot rise higher than its source. So I say, whoever he was—a real Christ, or the author of a fictitious Christ—I humbly bow to him; I venerate him; I reach across the abyss of centuries that separates us to shake him by the hand, and to thank him, in the name of all mankind, for the light he has shed upon the earth. He succeeded in moving the world as it has seldom been moved by a single man. It was through no fault of his that fools put absurdities into his mouth, and knaves misrepresented and lied about him. He did much to remove many false notions that had previously prevailed, and it was not his fault that mankind have since adopted other notions equally false. He never pretended that his death would wash away the sins of the world; nor that "baker's bread and grocer's wine" (Theodore Parker) could be so changed as to become a part of his body and blood, nor that partaking of such bread and wine (or body and blood, if you please) would heal the effects of sin. Such nonsense was invented long after the time

when Christ is supposed to have lived. I speak positively on this point, because I assume the logical fact that no really good man ever made false pretenses of any kind, unless driven to it by stress of circumstances. For instance, Moses (another great and good man) was pardonable, to a considerable extent, if not wholly so, for the pious frauds he practiced. Circumstances not of his seeking had made him absolute ruler over a stiff-necked people who had no established laws or customs. They all knew that he had no royal blood in his veins, but was one of themselves. Therefore they would treat his orders with contempt, unless he made them believe he was directed by a supernatural power. So he was accustomed to preface whatever he wanted to say by words indicating that God had said it. In a certain sense this was not untrue, in so far as what he said was the utterance of natural truth. The Ten Commandments, for instance, properly interpreted, are in the main laws of God, pre-existing from the beginning of time, and hence it was not improper to assert that God dictated them; but Moses felt compelled (and perhaps he was justified by his trying situation—I shall not stop to discuss that) to go further, and falsely pretend that God had actually chiseled the Commandments on the stone tablets with his own hand.

I have failed to discover any circumstances to justify Christ in making false pretenses, and so, as I said before, I deny that he made any.

REP. In the opening services one Sunday in May —

SAWYER. I have for some time been thinking of giving a few practical lessons in botany, for the reason that I have frequently been not only annoyed, but actually disgusted, at finding people of the highest intelligence most wofully ignorant of the differences which distinguish many of our commonest varieties of trees, shrubs, and plants. I am not a scientific botanist—I am not a botanist at all—but I have learned to recognize, by the countenance or features, as it were, nearly all of the vegetable kingdom that inhabit this climate. One of our young ladies just out of school is very expert in analyzing the blossoms of trees and other plants, and in that way determining the name and nature of the plant that bore the flower, by reference to a book which she has. But I found her generally quite nonplused if I showed her a leaf, piece of bark, or section of wood from a plant, shrub, or tree, if I did not also produce the blossom belonging to each. A person who has a thorough *practical* knowledge of botany will seldom need to examine a flower, but he will instantly recognize almost any plant, tree, or shrub by a glance at a leaf, twig, or chip. I have said this much in order to give meaning to what I am about to say. Arrangements are nearly perfected by which, some Sunday early in June, all who desire to can go on an excursion out to Mr. Ellsworth's farm, about ten miles from here on the railway, for the purpose of taking a practical lesson on the subject I have introduced. Mr. Ellsworth has a large tract of timber of all sizes and varieties common in this section, lying close by the railroad, and he informs me that he has commenced to clear off a few

acres where we shall be free to cut and slash to our heart's content. He promises to be there himself with an ax to chop into any tree that anybody may wish to investigate. Open fields lie adjacent to the woods, and there is also near by a sort of wilderness, half wood, half open, part ravine, part swamp, and part dry, where many varieties of plants, trees, and shrubs grow in great profusion. The railroad company have agreed to run a train especially for us at reasonable excursion rates. I shall try to have on hand a sufficient number of practical woodmen with axes or hatchets to act as teachers. This excursion will not be limited to our own members, but all well-disposed persons are cordially invited. In order to secure us against the intrusion of ill-disposed persons, all tickets will be issued by the executive committee of this Church, and the committee will exercise discretion in withholding tickets from unworthy persons. All who wish to go should procure their tickets as early as Saturday noon, so that the railroad officials may have timely information as to how many cars will be required. The train will leave the station at 10 A.M., and will return about 5 or 6 P.M. Of course, whatever food will be required during our absence must be carried from here.

I sincerely trust that all who decide to take this trip will be made better thereby, and that the hours thus employed may be added to the time spent in "searching to find out God."

REP. It remains only to say that the above programme was carried out with signal success. The day was all that could be desired for such an occasion, and no untoward incident occurred that could

serve as a text for unfavorable criticism. Over eight hundred persons availed themselves of the opportunity, and all, like Oliver Twist, expressed a wish for more. Other similar excursions were had during the summer with equal success—one in each of the months of July, August, September, and October. Only two trips were made to Ellsworth's farm, but other parts of the country were visited with a view to other branches of instruction than botany, one trip being devoted particularly to geology and mineralogy.

One day a college professor from a neighboring state, who had been sojourning a few days in Pinville, was introduced to Uncle Job. The professor had attended the services at the Church of Practical Religion on the preceding Sunday, and on being introduced, he undertook to express his admiration for Uncle Job's preaching, and among other things in that line he said he thought the address he had listened to was a *very fine* one—

SAWYER (*interrupting*). Now you have touched me in a tender place indeed. Favorable comment, when it comes from the heart, is always gratifying, although it may embarrass us to receive it in person, at first hand; and even unfavorable comments, when not meant to be unfavorable, should doubtless be received in the same spirit that conceived them. Yet I feel that I must mildly protest against being called a *fine* preacher, even at the risk of offending a real friend, though I intend no offense. The fact is that *fine* preaching is just what I have been trying all the while to avoid above all other things, and I

should be sorry, indeed, if I had failed after all. My candid opinion is that in these latter days the whole world is being greatly afflicted with a superabundance of *fine* writing and *fine* speaking. If you want to find rugged strength in literature, you must go back to the writings of the older times when (although we may reject the sentiment expressed) every word had an edge like a knife, and every sentence was pregnant—actually squirming—with thought and feeling. But in these "weak piping times" *fine* writing and *fine* speaking (which nearly all seem to be struggling after) appear to consist in so smoothing away the sharp edges and polishing off the rugged places as to hide or destroy whatever vital principle of thought the writer or speaker may have intended to convey (if any) by his diction, so that the reader or hearer, as Hosea Biglow says, seems to "slide rite off as you du on the eedge of a mow." Fine writing and fine speaking seem to be chiefly employed by persons who *really* have nothing to say, but who either *think* they have, or wish to *make believe* they have. You leave the room where you have listened to what the latter-day critics call a fine speech, and you can not recall a single idea that the speaker conveyed to your mind, yet you felt highly pleased with the speech during its delivery, and the pleasant sensation continues for some time—in short, you are impressed in all respects very much as one is who listens to the strains of an Æolian harp or other untuned and untrained music. Fine writing is even worse than fine speaking, for the former lacks the musical effect found in the latter. You simply wade through words, words, words, in

search of an idea, and too often your labors go unrewarded.

PROFESSOR. I acknowledge the truth and justice of your strictures for the most part, and assure you that I did not intend to use the word *fine* in the sense that seems to have struck you. I was trying to convey to your mind the fact that your preaching met my approval, and in doing so I used the word *fine* without thought of the new and stilted meaning that is being grafted upon it of late. But don't you think you have made your remarks almost too sweeping?

SAWYER. Yes, I was intending to qualify them by admitting that some of the finest writers and speakers really have something to say, and they often say it, too, with the greatest force and effect; but to my mind they do their best work when they make their least effort to be *fine*.

REP. Uncle Job frequently drops hints on sanitary matters in his sermons, and also in private conversation; but one Sunday, when the public mind was somewhat excited over an expected visitation of cholera, he devoted a whole sermon to the condition of our village; from which I will make a few extracts, not so much because it contains anything new, as to show what kind of pulpit dissertation he deemed compatible with the worship of God.

SAWYER. What I am about to say concerning the sanitary condition of this village is not intended to condemn Pinville below all other places; but will apply with nearly equal force to most towns of its size anywhere. The fact is, there is a point in the

growth of every considerable town and city when its sanitary condition becomes simply terrible—and Pinville is now right in that worst period—I hope, at least, that we shall never be any worse in that respect than we are to-day. That terrible point lies just before the transition from an overgrown village, without sewers or water-works, into a well-regulated city, with all needed sanitary improvements. When the territory occupied by this village was only a rural neighborhood, it was doubtless as healthy a place to live in as any in the United States; but when the same ground is covered by a compact village without sewers or drainage, and without water, except from the natural sources, it becomes quite another thing, unless unusual care and caution are exercised by every inhabitant. Most of the water used for drinking and for cooking is drawn from wells, and I do not believe there is a particle of such water in the village that is pure and wholesome. On the flat portion of the town the wells are mostly made by driving iron tubes into the ground, and some seem to think, because a dog or cat cannot fall into one of these wells, that they are proof against impurities of all kinds. But this whole flat has been formed by the deposit of cobblestones, gravel, sand, and clay brought down by the river in an early day, and we all know it to be very porous. Now, every family has its cess-pool and its privy-vault, and there is no drain from either, except by percolation downward through the porous earth and stones. The pumps, constantly drawing water from the bottom of the wells, create vacuums there which have to be supplied continually from the surface; and, as the

cess-pool and privy usually have more moisture than other portions of the surface, they must be expected to furnish rather more than an even share toward filling the vacuums at the bottom of the wells. Of course, the most offensive portions of the water are strained out on its course through the sand, etc., towards the vacuums—at least, this is so until a well-defined channel has been worn direct from the cess-pool or vault to the vacuum, as often happens. If anybody doubts the existence of such underground channels, I would refer him to Mr. William Newcomb, who lost the use of a well entirely because, after a time, it became connected by such a channel with the gas-house, more than thirty rods away, and its waters were offensively impregnated with the refuse from the manufacture of gas. But some say that, while this may be so on the flat, it cannot be so on the side-hill, portion of the village, because there all wells have to be sunk through the solid rock. I was once of the latter opinion myself; but experience and reflection have led me to change my mind. All the water that we draw from the earth has first to get into the earth from the surface. This is proved by the fact that a long-continued drouth will dry up any well, unless it is fed directly from lake or river. The water somehow finds its way down through the rocks, and the contents of cess-pools and privies are just as likely to find their way into the wells as pure water is. Wherever we can see the perpendicular formation of the rocks, as in ravines, we observe that every few feet (sometimes every few inches) a perpendicular seam, crevice, or fault occurs, and the horizontal layers, too, are full of seams

through which water slowly oozes, and I suppose this formation to be just the same where the rocks are hidden from our sight. At any rate, I know the fact that a side-hill well on my own premises, which used to supply a whole neighborhood with excellent water, has become unfit for domestic use since Mr. Watson built his barn about five years ago. The barn stands about twenty rods from the well, nearly above, but partly to one side. The first year or two after the barn was built the water was not noticeably affected; but the third year, in the spring, when the frost was leaving the ground, the water became slightly colored, but corrected its color when settled weather came. The next year it was worse, and this spring it was so bad that the water looked as though it had been dipped from a pool near the manure-heap in the barn-yard. There was no mistaking the cause of the difficulty.

Many who reside near the river, recognizing the impurity of the well water, have resorted to river water, in the belief that running water purifies itself. I am not prepared to say that water cannot purify itself if it has time enough and is subjected to the proper influences; but I do not believe any purification takes place while running swiftly ten, or even fifty miles. Filth will become more or less dissolved and diluted in going that distance, and the heavier portions will settle to the bottom and continue to pollute the water that flows over them; but it would require considerable evidence to convince me that the contents of a privy dumped into the river fifty miles above here becomes chemically changed into pure and wholesome drinking-water by the time it

reaches us. I think such a proposition is absurd. Now, there are at least a dozen little villages on the river and its tributaries above us, and every inhabitant of every such village takes pains to throw all the foul stuff possible into the streams. Then there are farm-houses and barns all along between the villages, and along every brook and brooklet from its mouth to its source, and the streams, large and small, are invariably made use of as the easiest mode of getting rid of all manner of refuse and filth. Especially do farmers set their privies over brooks whenever possible. And then it is not an uncommon thing to see a dead and decaying horse or other animal lying partly in the water and partly out along the banks of the main stream and not far above us. In short, the river and its tributaries constitute a vast sewerage system for a considerable territory, and I believe it to be impossible for a receptable for filth to be at the same time the source of pure and wholesome water, at least to anybody below the highest riparian proprietor. In winter, when this same water is frozen, our ice-houses are filled with it. Perhaps this cannot be avoided at present, but I think the ice should only be used for cooling purposes, in refrigerators and ice-boxes, and that care should be taken to prevent the melted ice from mingling with anything that we eat or drink. I am not unmindful of the fact that much less filth flows into the river in winter than in summer, but yet I think it is never free from contamination. I must say that if some dire disease should seize upon us now, and sweep away a large part of our population. I should consider it a direct "visitation of God." I

know there are some high-toned people who think that old phrase is out of date; but I am always willing to give God his due, even to the extent of using old-fashioned expressions. I tell you again, my friends, God is Law, and I firmly believe that the state of things I have outlined to-day is a standing invitation to the "angel of destruction."

"What shall we do to be saved?"

First of all, stop using both well water and river water for drinking and cooking.

Second, thoroughly cleanse your cisterns, procure good filters, and hereafter use filtered rain water exclusively for drinking and all culinary purposes.

Third, destroy and fill up your cess-pools with dry earth, and hereafter deposit your house-slops on the surface of the bare ground in the broad glare of the sun. I have done this for years with excellent results. House-slops are not particularly offensive or unhealthy when first thrown out; but by standing in a pool until fermentation and partial decomposition take place, no privy-vault is more terrible. My waste pipe is an open wooden trough, and runs on top of the ground to a point near the roots of a thrifty tree, about fifty feet from the house, where the sun shines all through the middle of the day, and the place of deposit is changed a few feet quite frequently, the same places being used over and over again, and everything around there always seems perfectly sweet and wholesome.

Fourth, destroy and fill up your privy-vaults, set metallic pails (copper is best) to catch the droppings, treat the latter with dry pulverized earth, or gypsum, and empty as often as once a week in hot weather,

and two weeks is long enough for any time of year. If you have a garden, or other open ground, the contents of the pails may be safely buried there, but not deeply, where the sun shines. "Old Sol" and "Mother Earth" acting together are great purifiers when you give them a chance. Those who have no suitable place for burial will, of course, have to have the contents of their pails carted away either to the suburbs, where the farmers and gardeners will welcome them, or to the river, which we may as well use for a sewer as not, if everybody else continues to use it so, though I feel fearful that so much foul matter thrown into the river must poison the atmosphere more or less, and I would like to see the practice entirely abandoned. There are lots of men who will be glad to empty the pails and take care of their contents for a reasonable fee. Doubtless those who would have to have their pails carried away would also have to do likewise with their house-slops; for it *will not do* to pollute the soil of our village and also the air by making vast reservoirs of filth underground where nothing can purify them, and where they remain and accumulate nastiness for years—twenty years, I have heard in one case. These perennial, fermenting, festering, putrid pools of pollution generate an abundance of foul gases which force their way through the porous, overlying soil, and poison the air we breathe.

Fifth, the things I have mentioned must be done, if at all at the present time, by the voluntary action of our people, for there is no inclination, in our corporate authorities, even indeed if the power exists, to make any such improvements or regulations as I

have suggested; but I sincerely hope that this is that darkest hour that is said to precede the day. I hope our people will awake to a realization of their awful peril, and will work out for themselves a thorough, radical, and permanent reform by the adoption of complete systems of sewerage and water supply, as well as all other needed sanitary rules and regulations. These things, however, will require time and patience; but the other changes that I have mentioned can be adopted at once, and they *must* be, as we value our lives.

REP. One Sunday Uncle Job found on his desk a written slip containing the question: "What is Practical Religion?"

SAWYER. This question seems almost trivial at this late day and in this place, but I will assume that it comes from one of the strangers present, and so answer it briefly.

Practical religion is religion that is expected to stand the wear and tear of actual practice—a kind of natural, every-day religion. To illustrate a little: those who have known me long, have observed that I wear the same clothing every day in the week—Sundays and all. I also wear my religion in the same way. I have no more, nor better, nor different religion on Sundays than on any other day. A person who wishes to *live* his religion every day must be careful not to adopt and profess an *unreasonable* or impracticable religion. We think we have found a religion that will *wash*, and we have named it accordingly. There is enough of it for everybody, and everybody is cordially invited to partake thereof.

We have no faith in any religion that is too good to be practiced every day in the week.

REP. At the opening of the Sunday exercises, one day, Uncle Job startled his audience—

SAWYER. I am going to perform to-day in your presence as great a miracle as was ever performed by man since creation's dawn.

REP. Here Uncle Job produced from his pocket a small gyroscope, of the simplest style, and after subjecting it to the necessary manipulation, held it up and pointed out that it seemed to defy the law of gravitation.

SAWYER. No philosopher has ever satisfactorily explained the why and the wherefore of the movements of this little toy. Yet its movements are governed by *law* as much as the stars are in their courses. In fact, I am somewhat of the opinion that the same law that governs the solar system is also manifesting itself here before our very eyes. As I said before, no greater miracle was ever performed by human agency than you have witnessed to-day; and yet this is not a miracle at all. In other words, there is no such thing as a miracle, and never was. Everything that we do not understand is *mysterious*, but not *miraculous*. To believe in miracles is to believe that the world is not governed by law, which is false and absurd. Some of the mysteries which were formerly called miracles have been fully solved and explained, and perhaps others may be in the fulness of time; but some that we read of are so manifestly false that I must be pardoned for saying flatly that they will never be explained nor proved possible.

At the close of the exercises, I hope any who desire to will come forward and examine this gyroscope more closely. It is a wonderful thing—a mysterious thing; but not a trick nor a humbug. When I first saw it in operation, I could hardly believe my senses. God is great.

In a prelude—

SAWYER. I have recently had a very interesting conversation on the subject of the resurrection with a clergyman whom I believe to be a very good and perfectly sincere man. He said he had searched the Bible through prayerfully again and again to find proof of a life beyond the grave, but that he found no hope except in the resurrection; and his idea of the resurrection is that what we call death is just as absolutely the end of all for a human being as for a snake or insect, and that nothing short of omnipotent power can call the dead back to life; that God can do that just as easily as he could create life in the beginning; and that God had promised to restore life to us by the resurrection. He thinks we shall be conscious of nothing from the time of death until the resurrection, even though millions of years should elapse. He expects to be physically restored to life by the resurrection, and upon this same earth, so as to be precisely the same man he is now, with substantially the same environments—nothing more and nothing less. I asked him if he didn't dread the yawning gulf of ages that intervened. He said No; that we would realize that period no more than we now do a sleep from night till morning. I do not know how widespread this particular belief is, but

this man seemed perfectly contented and happy with it. I am afraid, however, that I staggered him a little by suggesting that if the world should continue to stand as long in the future as it has in the past, the whole surface of the earth, from pole to pole, including both land and sea, would scarcely afford standing-room for the resurrected population. I told him I thought they would be pressed together like figs in a box. He said he hadn't thought of it in that light, but he was sure the Lord would provide amply for their comfort and happiness in some way.

These things have led me to reflect upon the spirit world as believed in by the Spiritualists and by Christians generally. If a spirit has length, breadth, and thickness—that is, if it occupies a portion of space so that two spirits can not occupy the same space at the same time—then, with the earth and all the celestial orbs acting as perpetual factories of undying spirits, it would seem possible for a time to come when the spirit-world would be overstocked. But this is only human logic applied to a human supposition, and it doesn't trouble me much if the supposition suffers from the application of the logic. I feel as certain that God will provide what is best as my clerical friend does, and I am willing to trust God entirely as to the how and when and where. I shall spend but little time in guessing; for, of all the countless thousands of guesses that have been, and will be, made on the subject, only one *can* be right, and perhaps not even one.

REP. About the time of General Grant's death,

Uncle Job followed the custom then prevailing and preached a sermon on Grant; but it was not all eulogy. He said it would be doing a great wrong to the rising generation to hold General Grant up to them as a pattern in all respects worthy of imitation. For it is well known, he said, that Grant had faults, and some grievous ones, and that he had committed terrible mistakes (some of them amounting almost to crimes) not only as a soldier, but as president, and as a citizen. Uncle Job mentioned two or three instances of what he called mistakes in Grant's military career; but said he did not intend to discuss military matters to any great extent, as he did not consider himself competent to do so. He said, however, that there were some things that were so plain as to be readily seen by an unprofessional eye. One of these was Grant's awful blunder in allowing himself to be surprised, and his army overwhelmed and almost destroyed, at Shiloh. No army, said he, is safe in an enemy's country unless properly guarded by pickets or skirmishers in advance of it on all exposed sides. But Grant supposed he was pursuing a retreating enemy, and so neglected a precaution that should never be neglected under any circumstances. Some persons attempt to excuse this blunder by saying that our people won the battle, and, therefore, that the blunder was harmless. I deny, said Uncle Job, that the blunder did no harm. Thousands of men, as good as Grant himself, suffered on account of it, and we shall be wise not to forget it. We are too apt to look upon the fortunes of military commanders as constituting all that is at stake in war, and to forget that the

brave men who do all the actual fighting and endure most of the physical suffering are something more than mere buttons on a checker-board.

Uncle Job mentioned several of Grant's acts as president, which he denounced as gross mistakes, if not crimes. I will only mention one here as a sample, and will give it substantially in his own words:

SAWYER. Grant made one terrible mistake (and at the time it seemed to me like a crime) by thwarting the ends of justice in what were called the Whisky Ring prosecutions. I don't believe Grant had any interest in or actual knowledge of the frauds; but some of his friends were less fortunate in that respect. Grant was president, and when the frauds were discovered, he said, with righteous fire, "Let no guilty man escape," and the prosecutions were pushed vigorously with his approval. But when the indictments began to reach into his own official household, and to alight upon his near personal friends, his mind changed and also his conduct. He then directed the discharge of the most energetic counsel engaged in the prosecutions, and appointed a military commission, ostensibly to assist in the investigation, but really with the intention of obstructing the due administration of justice. He took all force and spirit out of the prosecutions, and caused them to languish and finally to die. I do not know but I am the only man on this continent who will refer to such matters as these on a funeral occasion, but I am deeply impressed with the idea that if such things are allowed to be forgotten, our young men will grow up with the notion that one or two

righteous acts will wipe out and condone any grievous offense they may wish to commit.

REP. Uncle Job also took occasion to make some remarks regarding General Grant's private life, in part as follows:

SAWYER. His inordinate use of tobacco brought its legitimate results; for there can be no doubt that the malady of which he died was a direct "dispensation of Providence"—a punishment for excessive self-indulgence. And then, I have been unable to believe him so entirely innocent of all of Ferdinand Ward's transactions as people generally appear, or pretend, to think he was. General Grant was not an idiot, and he had lived in this world upwards of sixty years; was in reasonably good health, and had ample opportunity to ascertain how Ward managed to obtain the immense profits he promised. Grant knew that those promised profits were abnormally large, and if he had had only ordinary curiosity, he must have wondered many times how they were obtained. Did he never ask Ward to explain how he could afford to pay 240 per cent a year for loans? Did Ward respond, with a wink, that it would be better for Grant not to pry too closely into the secrets of the business? There is something about these matters that we don't know the whole truth about yet. I am forced to believe that Grant suspected that Ward's operations were not honest, but yet was willing to profit by them, and to promote them with his great name, if he could do so without becoming an actual, knowing participant in the wrong-doing. In other words, I am afraid Grant willingly shut his eyes, and purposely kept himself

ignorant of his partner's guilty acts so as to be able to plead the "baby act" if Ward should get into trouble. Perhaps he was a little like the Irishman who, having signed the pledge, wished somebody would mix a "dhrap of the crathur with his drink *unbeknownst* to him." Of course, Grant had no thought that possibly Ward might cheat his partner. He believed, if there was no honor among thieves, yet that Ward would not kill the goose that was laying him golden eggs; and so, with his eyes voluntarily closed, he was allured to his ruin. "Oh, what a fall was there, my countrymen!"

This was another "visitation of God." I want to impress upon my brethren indelibly the fact that effect follows cause in this world with the certainty of fate. Tamper not with evil in the hope of dodging the consequences, for you will surely fail. Remember Grant, and learn wisdom from his sad experience.

But, in spite of all of Grant's faults and mistakes, he had many noble qualities worthy of the highest praise. I need not dilate upon them, for all the changes will be rung on them for months and years to come. As a soldier he has the distinction of being the only Union commander who caused the surrender of any considerable body of the enemy's troops. I do not forget Banks at Port Hudson, but that surrender was largely owing to Grant's success at Vicksburg. Nor do I ignore the several capitulations after Appomattox; but they were all due entirely to the surrender of Lee's army. This is indeed a rare distinction—one that his family may well be proud of—but it is no reason why we should

grow so wild as to twist his very faults into virtues, and his blunders into marks of genius. I hear it said all about me that Grant was never defeated; but I assert that he was often defeated both in the West and in Virginia. When a man undertakes to do a certain thing in a certain way, and fails, what is it but a defeat? It is none the less a defeat because he gets up and tries again in some other way. Grant was defeated in the Wilderness, at Spottsylvania, at Cold Harbor, and many times about Petersburg. But, says one, you will concede that Grant never *retreated*. No, I am not ready yet to concede even that; for I have always understood until lately that he retreated in considerable haste from Belmont. I don't wish to be captious, but I do hope to prevent people from forgetting that our armies were composed of several other men besides Grant. It was not Grant, but the spirit of the FREE NORTH, that conquered the Rebellion. The Rebellion had to be cut down like a very large and tough tree—by blow after blow with the ax. We broke and damaged several pretty good axes before the job was completed, and Grant happened to be the principal ax we were using when the tree finally fell. Each performed his part as well as he could considering his environments, and contributed his full share to the grand result; and we shall only make fools of ourselves now by bestowing all the credit upon one man. I remember a company of soldiers that went from this place in those dark days of April, 1861. Some of those war-worn, battle-shattered, bullet-scarred heroes are with us now; but some perished in the deadly struggle. You re-

member, my friends, that the sound of Beauregard's guns at Charleston had hardly ceased to reverberate among these hills before our village was swarming with young men, of excellent character and family, hunting for a recruiting office. Those men "marched to the sound of the enemy's cannon." They did not enlist to better their condition, but they all made genuine sacrifices, as you all know. I tell you these men were *real heroes*. Talk to me about Grant! What sacrifice did he make for his country? What physical suffering did he endure? Oh, yes, he volunteered. I admit that. He was willing to take command of a regiment, where he could have a horse to ride and a good salary to put into his pocket; but if these have been denied to him the probability is that he would still be working in an Illinois tan-yard. He was willing to go to war, if he could thereby better his condition. He *did* better his condition. He was made commander of the armies, president of the United States, and a millionaire; and yet I am told that his family are not satisfied. Oh, shame on them! Let us give to General Grant all that is due him, in overflowing measure; but in doing so let us be careful that we subtract nothing from the just deserts of others.

CHAPTER XIX.

A REVIEW OF THE ELECTION—A NEW PARTY—ITS PRINCIPLES AND ITS ORGAN.

REP. In my efforts at condensation, I had decided to omit mention of a certain matter which, ever since such decision, has been continually dancing before my eyes, night and day, demanding notice, and it will not down at my bidding, so I have at last concluded to give it recognition in a short chapter here.

Soon after the election heretofore mentioned, in which Mr. Skillet defeated Mr. Gibson, in a Sunday prelude—

SAWYER. The recent auction, miscalled an election, was one of the most corrupt in the history of our county. I am glad to believe that some who had previously participated in such corruption had become so ashamed of it that they behaved themselves properly in the last campaign; but others appear to have been stung to raving madness by my efforts here to prevent their vile practices. At any rate, Mr. Bottle, Mr. Badsinner, Mr. Puppet, and their lackeys waded into the corrupt work with a zeal and boldness that seemed fairly desperate. They assumed a regular What-are-you-going-to-do-about-it?

air; and, so far as legal remedy is concerned, we can do nothing about it, for the legal machinery is all in their hands. They feel so secure from punishment that they even make no bones* of admitting their crimes to friends and foes alike, on the streets, or wherever the subject is mentioned. Our little circle had reason to feel the result of the so-called election very bitterly in the defeat of Brother Gibson; but, while I feel the ties of personal friendship as strongly as any one, yet it is in a far higher and broader aspect than mere friendship or partisanship that I now view this subject. Where is this thing to end? What is our country coming to? These matters are growing worse from year to year. I do not charge or believe that either one of the great political parties is any worse than the other in this respect; but I am proud to know that occasionally a man can yet be found who will not "palter with eternal God for power." I *know*, as well as a man can know anything, that our brother Gibson is that kind of man. He is a man of some means, and could easily have purchased the election if he had been willing to do so. I know that he was importuned by the prostitutes for money, and that he refused them. I know that, when the elec-

* When opportunity occurred, I called Uncle Job's attention to this expression, and gently hinted that, though it was common in the vernacular, I had never been able to see any sense or propriety in it, to say nothing of its inelegance.

SAWYER. Why, as for elegance, you know I pay but little attention to that; but to me that expression always had a most vivid meaning. If a cat or dog tries to eat a piece of meat with a bone in it, it is hard work; but the animal will very easily and quickly get rid of a piece that has no bone. Hence, to make *no bones* of anything is to make nothing of it.—REP.

tion day was near at hand, he was implored by some of the best men (so called) in his party to accede to the demands of the prostitutes, and thus make sure of his election—they believing that his defeat would be a public calamity—but he steadfastly refused, and he tells me that he is glad that he refused, and would do just so again. I know that he will be rewarded for that straightforward conduct, for "virtue is its own reward." Perhaps the meanest thing his opponents did, aside from their crimes, was to start the hue and cry, while in the very act of buying votes against him, that he had flooded the county with money to corrupt the voters with and to defeat a poor man. This most scandalous and damnable lie was concocted by Badsinner, and his hired prostitutes shouted and howled it at every poll in the county from morning till night; and I am informed, I am sorry to say, that some very good but silly people, who would have refused to take the word of any of these prostitutes for the loan of five cents, were influenced by this hue and cry, and refused to vote for so corrupt a man—which fact speaks better for their hearts than for their heads.

One of the candidates for sheriff started out with the honest intention of adhering strictly to the law, and he did so until he was visited by a committee of so-called best men of his party, when he fell. From that moment there was no end to the demands of the prostitutes until sunset on election day. They bled him badly—having started down hill, there was no stopping-place—but at that time most of them had been soured against him by previous refusals, and they simply pocketed his money and permitted,

or assisted in, his defeat—and he *was* defeated. He paid the penalty of his weakness, and I hope he will derive both profit and wisdom from that dear-bought part of his education. Which of these two defeated candidates, think you, feels the better to-day?

But I said I was looking at these things in a higher and broader sense. I tell you, my friends, this corruption will have an end *somewhere*. Perhaps there may yet be among us as many righteous men as God was willing to save Sodom for, and, if so, the corrupt tide may yet be turned back and the country saved from impending doom. But, if we lack that sufficient number of righteous men, I warn you, my brethren, that this government and this people will go down in wreck and ruin just as surely, and just as literally, as Sodom was sunk, according to the old story; for God reigns, my brethren, and this is God's logic.

Some time ago I suggested the idea that one means of cure for this evil might be found in the organization of a new political party, with "*purity in elections*" for its corner-stone; but mere suggestions amount to nothing unless they are acted upon; and since the last election I have been thinking very seriously of trying to start such a party in this county. I know full well that all the prostitutes and other base beings, as well as those other shameless villains of high and low degree who furnish the corruption funds and profit by their use, will sneer and scoff at such a project, as one of "old Job Sawyer's cranky notions," with other expressions of contempt less polite; but I care no more for that, personally, than for the wheezing of so many old bagpipes. I only fear that derision of me may deter some of the weak-hearted

from assisting in the work, and that, in that way, I may become a clog and detriment to the undertaking. Nevertheless, I have resolved to make the effort, and then, whatever the result may be, I shall at least have the sweet satisfaction and reward of knowing that I have done what little was in my power to save our institutions from the doom of Sodom. When I look over the field and contemplate the up-hill work, and all the obstacles to be surmounted, I feel that my feeble voice will be, indeed, a voice crying in the wilderness. So it was with Jonah, but he saved Nineveh—after he had been severely punished for shirking a known duty.

I propose to commence to-day and at this moment. Every voter within the sound of my voice who is willing to become a charter member of the new party will please rise to his feet.

REP. Fully one hundred and fifty men stood up, including some half-dozen political prostitutes and scallawags in the back part of the room, who had dropped in to get texts for sport and jests; but they slid out of the door near by without taking their seats again. In a moment all were seated, and then—

SAWYER. That is a good start. Let all of you who decide to join the new party meet with me in this room next Saturday night, at eight o'clock, for further action, and in the mean time let each of us strive to induce his neighbors to unite with us. Let it be understood that no man will be barred out on account of race, color, or previous political affiliation. I will even be in favor of taking in the prostitutes, if they are willing to join us, and will agree to "go, and in

no more;" but it will take a pretty long season of good conduct on their part to satisfy me that any of them ought to be allowed to hold any place of trust. We will now proceed with the regular work of the day.

REP. The Saturday night meeting was attended by about one hundred voters, and nearly every one of them reported one or more others who would join, but who could not attend the meeting for one reason or another. Those present were full of zeal, and Gustavus Nash was especially demonstrative. He said he hailed the movement with exceeding joy. He said that, on account of our corrupt politics, he had for years been so disgusted with republican government that he had advocated a return to a limited monarchy as the only cure for the evil that he could conceive of. In fact, he said, he thought that was just where we were now drifting to; for the great, honest, industrious, economical, thrifty, and well-to-do middle class was being gradually ground to atoms between the upper and nether millstones, namely, the rich who buy votes, and the poor who sell them, so that in the end a few will be very rich and all the rest will be poor and dependent, and then some Cæsar will assume the throne of empire; and after that again, our children's children will have to battle a thousand years to regain the freedom that so many people are now willing to throw away, or to sell for a song.

Others made speeches expressing their sentiments with energy, and finally—

SAWYER. I am glad to see so much enthusiasm at the outset, and I hope the head of steam now on will

not be allowed to exhaust itself in mere talk. Our party, to amount to anything, must have an efficient organization; that is to say, there is much work to be done without pay, and the duty of doing particular parts of the work must be assumed by, or thrust upon, *somebody*, and those somebodies must *know* what their tasks are, and must perform them, or we shall fail. I suppose we shall to-night adopt some sort of "platform" for our party, and then I think a thorough personal canvass should be made all over the county to get signatures to the platform. We should also have an "organ" of some kind and somebody to edit and manage it. I will say right here that I have this week tried all three of the newspapers printed here, and offered to pay what I thought was a reasonable sum for one column weekly, to be edited by a person designated by us; but all demanded advertising rates, and very high rates they were, too—so high as to be practically prohibitory. I have also visited the little job office on River street, and I find them willing to assist us at very reasonable rates. They have a small steam power, and a job press capable of printing a page ten inches by twelve in size. This will answer our present needs, I think, and I have promised to assist them in buying a more suitable press as soon as it shall appear to be needed. We can start a little two-page paper at once, at a merely nominal subscription price—say twenty-five cents a year—and no postage will be required within the county, either on specimen copies or those sent to regular subscribers. But, I feel bound to say, at the very outset, gentlemen, that my part in all that is necessary to be done will

have to be mainly of an advisory character; for I am already engaged in duties that I see no immediate escape from, which consume all my time and all my strength.

I think it should be understood, and so explicitly stated from the start, that this political movement has no connection whatever with, nor relation to, the religious movement with which my name is identified; so that, no matter how much any person may be prejudiced against me, or the Church of Practical Religion, he may still become a member of the new political party, without indorsing me, or compromising any religious sentiment he may entertain.

I suppose we shall in this movement (as some of us have been already) be charged with Phariseeism—claiming to be better than other men, and thanking God for it—but no really sensible person will be influenced by such clap-trap as that. If a man tries and professes to be as good as it is possible for a man to be, he ought not to be afraid or ashamed to hang his banner on the outer wall—not boastfully, of course, but to let his light shine and thereby do good to others. Professors of almost every variety (except of mere goodness) wear, at times, appropriate badges of their professions, and I want some one to tell me why professors of decency, honesty, morality, and religion should be debarred that privilege. There is an absurd prejudice extant against a man's professing to be pure, honest, or religious. One day I was conversing with the Hon. Mr. Goosepimple, and I took occasion, as is my wont, to speak of Badsinner as an unclean beast, and Mr. Goosepimple turned on me, with some show of feeling, and said

that he was sick and disgusted with so much cant and prating about honesty, decency, and goodness. I was struck dumb, for once in my life; for I had always before supposed him to be a perfectly pure and upright man; but, after that, I was forced to believe either that he repeated the expression, like a parrot, from the sayings of others, or that he had, at some period of his life, winked at, or truckled to, matters that were not straight, and felt a sort of fellow feeling for the weak ones. I have felt a deep sorrow and pity for Mr. Goosepimple ever since; and I have also felt that he would bear watching.

One word more, and I have done. I foresee that, if our party should ever get strong enough to hope to elect its candidates, there will still be the same temptation for interested persons to resort to corruption that now exists; we must therefore make it one of our cardinal principles that, whenever one of our candidates, or his friends, seeks advancement by corrupt means, it shall be the duty of the whole party to forsake him and cast its vote for a new, or other acceptable, candidate.

REP. A brief "platform," drawn up by Mr. Gibson, was adopted, which embodied the substance of what I have above recited as the design of the new party, and need not be quoted *in extenso*. The name adopted was "The Anti-corruption Party." Mr. Nash volunteered to canvass the county for signatures to the platform and for subscribers to the proposed "organ." He said he could do this while on his regular rounds buying live-stock and produce. He also proposed to hold public meetings in different neighborhoods, and thus endeavor to form local organizations

to assist in the work. When the question was asked, Who would edit the newspaper? all eyes were instantly turned toward Mr. Gibson. He, however, feared that, having been so recently defeated for a political office, he would be stigmatized as a "*sore-head*," and thus his usefulness might be impaired; but, being assured by all present that such nonsense could do no harm, he consented; and soon after, the meeting, having finished its business, adjourned.

After the meeting, while I was walking homeward with Uncle Job, we fell in with Mr. Puppet, who asked Uncle Job, with a polite sneer, what he hoped to accomplish with his new political party.

SAWYER (*coldly and stiffly*). I have many hopes that may never bear fruit, or even blossom; but one thing I am *sure* of—and that is that the new party will afford me an opportunity to vote for candidates that I am not ashamed of.

REP. I must not close this chapter without quoting a little from the first issue of the new "organ," which appeared in just one week from the formation of the new party. The little paper (two pages, ten by twelve inches) was called *The Candle*, and it had for mottos, under the heading, on the left, "Purity in Elections," and on the right, "Clean Men for Office." The first article was entitled "SALUTATORY," from which I make the following extracts:

"The candle is a modest light, but it is an honest, old-fashioned one, and, for that reason, is still highly prized by honest, old-fashioned people. In these modern days candles are little used except for making searches in garrets and cellars and dark corners where other lights seldom or never shine; and this, in a measure, will be the office of *The Candle* in this county.

"Some critic may say that, to institute this little paper in a county where there are several larger ones already, is like lighting a 'tallow dip' in a room where several gaslights are already burning. To such critic we answer, 'Yea, verily.' What, then, is the excuse? It is this: The several newspapers already in operation, though, like gaslights, they are brilliant, yet, unfortunately, like gaslights, they are *stationary*. They illuminate one side of every object splendidly; but the other side is left in total darkness—rendered doubly dark by the light on the opposite side—and these dark places have become the permanent hiding-places of persons who 'love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.' The light of *The Candle* shall be made to shine into some of these dark dens of wickedness, so that honest people may see what is going on therein. There are reputations in this county which, in all the light that the aforesaid several newspapers have hitherto shed upon them, seem fair to look upon. *The Candle*, when held close to these (as it assuredly will be), will show some of them to be '*filled with dead men's bones and all uncleanness.*'

"*The Candle* will be, for the present, the 'organ' of the 'Anti-corruption' political party, recently born in this village, further mention whereof will be found elsewhere in this issue; but, while it labors with all its power to wipe out political corruption, it will not be oblivious to the other living issues of the day—and especially will it advocate the legal suppression of the traffic in intoxicating liquors.

"*The Candle* will be earnestly and thoroughly religious in tone, but without sectarian bias.

"For the present, *The Candle* will only be lighted once a fortnight, and upon the support which decent people extend to it must depend the question whether it shall be lighted more frequently, and increase in size and brilliancy, or be finally 'snuffed out' altogether."

REP. It would be interesting to add further quotations from *The Candle*, and to follow its progress, and also the prospects of the new political party; but those matters are foreign to my general purpose, and are only thrown in incidentally as *side lights* to the great religious movement of which

Uncle Job Sawyer is the head. But I will say simply that the third number of *The Candle* was a four-page sheet, and commenced thence to be a weekly, and at this writing Uncle Job is making arrangements to redeem his promise to furnish its publishers with a larger press. The prospects of the new party seem very bright indeed, and some of its more sanguine members are already predicting that it will sweep the county at the very first opportunity to show its strength.

CHAPTER XX

LAW REFORM—COURTS AND TRIBUNALS—LEGAL UNCERTAINTIES AND PERPLEXITIES.

REP. From time to time, in prelude or in sermon, Uncle Job has descanted upon various topics of more or less interest (often of mere local consequence) under the general head of what he calls "Law Reform." I propose now to gather together, and condense into this chapter, the more important portions of his remarks upon that subject.

SAWYER. Our laws, through centuries of legislative tinkering and judicial twisting, have become a maze of nonsense, intricacies, and contradictions, as well as a most expensive and uncertain system of jurisprudence. Every effort to reduce the law to a certainty only serves to render it more uncertain. The lawyers get more blame for this than is their just due, though, no doubt, they are responsible for much of it. Our judges are laboring like Titans, night and day, to decide disputes between man and man in accordance with previous decisions of similar cases; but industrious lawyers can almost always confound the judges by producing a nearly equal number of respectable precedents on either side of any given case. The fact is that the number of pre-

cedents has become so perfectly enormous that they serve more to bewilder the struggling judge than to enlighten him, and this is constantly growing worse. It is no exaggeration to say that more law-books have been printed in the English language within the last twenty years than had been produced in twenty centuries preceding. In this one little State of New York more books of legal precepts and precedents have been manufactured since the beginning of the late civil war than had been brought forth between that time and the Declaration of Independence, and still the flood-tide keeps swelling. I was recently talking with one of our judges of the Supreme Court who was, at the time, laboring with General Term causes, and he spoke about *guessing* at his decisions. Of course, he was joking, but the joke would have lacked point if the decision of important cases was not often so very puzzling to the judges as to make them feel as though they were simply *guessing* at the right of the matter. While the uncertainties and perplexities of the law are increasing from year to year, litigation has also increased to such an extent that the judges are crying out for some sort of relief—something to assist them in clearing their overburdened dockets; and, strange as it may seem, the scheme that seems to meet with most favor is to create one or more intermediate courts of appeal. Now, more appellate courts cannot, in the nature of things, make justice any more certain than it is now, if, indeed, any appellate court whatever increases the certainty of doing justice; for it is a well-known fact that the judges of our most exalted tribunals often possess less ability and

learning than many of the judges of inferior courts. Hence, when a decision is reversed on appeal, the last decision is just as likely to be wrong as the first. I knew of one case involving many thousands of dollars which was passed upon, first and last, by eleven very eminent judges, five of whom decided one way, and six directly the reverse; and, still more strange to say, the five carried the day against the six. If the idea is to tire out litigants by prolonged delays and intolerable expenses, then the more intermediate appellate courts we have the better will that end be accomplished. But the honest people don't want delay, nor expense in settling their disputes. Delay and expense are the weapons of rogues. I believe I speak only the truth when I say that every honest man who has a dispute, wants that dispute fairly, finally, and inexpensively decided just as quickly as possible. We don't need *more* appellate courts, but *fewer* of them; and if all of our vast and complicated web of the law could be wiped out, and all disputes decided by the simple rule of the *try-square* by a single judge, without any appeal, more justice would be done to the square inch than is done under the present system to the square mile. If I had the power, I would knock all of these old-fogyisms sky-high, and though I might be cursed by my own generation, I have a strong faith that future generations would rise up and call me blessed.

But the uncertainties and perplexities of our laws, and the delay and expense attending their administration, are not the only bad features in our system of government. Laws were instituted for the protection of good people against the violence and dis-

honesty of bad men; but through the processes of time, and the inattention of the good people, the bad men have gained control, to a very large extent, of the law-making power, and also to some extent of the machinery of administration. Our judges, in the main, are honest men who are doing the best they can under the circumstances, but they are often, if not always, handicapped and prevented from doing justice by the laws framed by the very rogues who need to feel the "halter draw." Take our criminal law, for example. How often have we seen the most atrocious criminals slip through the meshes of the law so adroitly and so easily as to leave upon our minds the painful conviction that the holes had been left on purpose for their escape! It is a deplorable fact that our criminal law has been systematically built up with the idea constantly in view of giving guilty persons every possible chance of escape. This was the result of a reaction against the great severity (and great certainty, too,) of criminal punishment in the early days of our common law; but the pendulum has now swung clear to the opposite extreme, and there is much need of a reformation. One of the great breastworks behind which criminals take refuge is that provision of the law that no man can be convicted except by the verdict of a jury. That in itself is a sort of lottery that gives the guiltiest person at least eleven chances of escape to one for convictien. But that is not all. No matter how grossly the jury may err, through ignorance, prejudice, or corruption, if the guilty party is once acquitted, the people have no redress by appeal, or otherwise; for then another provision

of our absurd laws steps in, and says that no man shall be twice put in jeopardy for the same offense. Not so, however, if, perchance, the culprit be convicted by the jury. He is allowed to appeal from one court to another until, as by a staircase built on purpose for his use, he has climbed to the very highest tribunal in the land, and too lamentably often he succeeds in getting a new trial, that is, the privilege of going through the lottery process again before a brand-new jury. By this time the people have become so worn out with the endless struggle with technicalities and perplexing uncertainties, or have lost their interest in the prosecution to such an extent, that the rogue's chances of escape are largely increased. Or perhaps important witnesses have died, or moved beyond the borders of the state—either of which events will be favorable to the prisoner; for it is a well-settled principle of our criminal law that the offender on trial shall have an opportunity to confront the opposing witnesses in open court. Hence, if an essential witness for the prosecution gets over the state line, no power short of actual bribery can secure to the people the benefit of his testimony; but, on the other hand, the accused person can send legal authority to Europe, Africa, or "far Cathay" for the testimony of witnesses in his own behalf, and the law has carefully laid down rules under which the testimony may be written down in the foreign land, and read on the trial with the same effect as though the witness were personally present.

Again, our law is careful to give every culprit on trial the benefit of every doubt, either on questions

of law or in matters of fact. To be sure, the law says that the doubt must be a *reasonable* one; but this qualification has no force with an ordinary jury. Experience shows that the more unreasonable the doubt is, in the judgment of sound-minded men, the more likely the jury will be to acquit the criminal on account of it. The great difficulty of convicting anybody of a crime is so well recognized by prosecuting officers that they generally make no effort to convict, except in the clearest and most notorious cases. This remark does not exactly apply perhaps to a set of miserable wretches who have no means for defense. This class is frequently very unjustly worried and persecuted by the officers of the law.

The good people of our country are also most foully wronged by many methods which seem to be entirely beyond the reach of the criminal law, or any other law. In fact, the very arms of the law are used by cunning rogues, like cat's-paws, to draw chestnuts from the fire. Look at our village board of trustees, for example—a set of irresponsible fellows (the majority of them) who neither pay taxes nor care for those who do. They sit there in the comfortable rooms they have built with money wrung from us, and vote away our property right and left to their friends and accomplices. I admit that our village is not so bad at present as it used to be, nor was it ever so bad as some that I have heard of; but tell me what redress we have when the trustees pay a man one hundred dollars to whom only twenty-five dollars is due, or two hundred and fifty dollars to one to whom nothing is due!

Look again at our town auditing boards. Their

action is often but little else than a mode of legalizing the peculations of the town officers and their confederates outside. Within my personal knowledge, town boards in this vicinity make a regular practice of allowing double the legal fees for services performed by certain town officers. Then, these boards audit the bills of their individual members without any examination or inquiry, and the only protection the town has from fraud is the consciences (such as they are) of the fellows who render the bills. Then, our boards of supervisors are worse than the smaller boards. In our county, thousands and thousands of dollars are unlawfully paid out of the people's pockets. I am not now meaning to charge actual bribery of, or stealing by, the supervisors—though I have no doubt those evils exist to a greater or less extent, in some counties, if not in ours—but, out of the hundreds of claims annually presented, nearly every one contains more or less of unlawful or exorbitant charges, and the supervisors are all so ambitious to go to the legislature, some time or other, that they prefer to allow whatever is claimed rather than make an enemy by strict adherence to the law. Why, there is old Dr. Bilger, who had a large doctor-bill against a poor neighbor who finally died unable to pay the debt. The man was never a pauper, and the doctor's claim was no more a county charge then any other debt the poor man owed. Nevertheless, the doctor made out a bill of nearly five hundred dollars against the county for doctoring in the dead man's family for upward of ten years. I was present when the matter was discussed in the board, and I was pleased to observe that every one treated it as too

absurd and ridiculous to require serious consideration; but later I was shocked, in reading the list of audits, to find that the doctor's bill had been allowed as claimed. At the first opportunity, I asked one of the supervisors what in the world they allowed that claim for. He leered, and answered in these memorable words: "Oh, to tell the truth, the doctor has had political aspirations for some years that have never been gratified, and he has now become impressed with the idea that the county ought to do something for him; and so we thought we would allow his claim, and so prevent him from getting permanently soured." I asked, "What interest have the taxpayers in keeping him sweet?" "Oh, well," said the supervisor, with another leer, "the doctor has a political influence that cannot be entirely ignored." I determined to see if there was not some legal redress for this outrage, and so went before the grand jury and made complaint; but I was simply laughed at by the grand jury, and the district attorney to boot; and ever since then, whenever I meet one of the guilty supervisors, or Dr. Bilger, I notice that they all have a struggle to suppress their mirth until I am out of sight.

Then the amounts the supervisors annually allow to printers is perfectly damnable. If a county officer publishes a notice or advertisement in one paper, every other paper in the county prints it also and charges it to the county at exorbitant rates. They all publish, without any pretence of authority, notices of sittings of courts, lists of jurors drawn to attend courts, election notices, proceedings of courts and of the board of supervisors, etc., etc., etc., too

numerous to recount, and claim pay for it from the county; and the worst part of the matter is that nobody ever heard of a printer's bill being rejected, or even cut down below the amount claimed. Of course, there are certain matters that have to be printed at public expense, but in such cases the printers charge the county from two to five times what a private person would have to pay for the same work. For instance, I have known five dollars a page to be charged and allowed for printing a court calendar. Now, I will agree to do that job for one dollar a page, and I can hire the work done on terms that will give me a nice profit. You see, the ambitious supervisors are afraid to make a printer mad for fear of being lashed at some inconvenient time by an editorial blackguard. There are, no doubt, frequently cases where some of the supervisors derive pecuniary profit from the allowance of unlawful claims; but I am not now dealing with that class of cases. The grand trouble is that the men we elect supervisors are *cowards*, and these things will grow worse, instead of better, until we send brave men there, who will faithfully work for *us* instead of for their own ambition.

Then there is the State legislature, made up largely of the most knavish supervisors in the several counties of the State. Do you expect them to do any better at Albany than they have done at their local county seats? Hundreds of thousands of dollars are annually taken out of our pockets by the legislature for the enrichment of thieves. This is so well understood that I need not enlarge upon it. Members of the legislature have told me again and again that the easiest kind of bill to get enacted into a law is

one intended to draw money from the treasury. You remember, a few years ago, while Mr. Puppet was in the assembly, that Mr. Newcomb's team, worth about two hundred and fifty dollars, ran away, jumped into the canal, and were drowned. Everybody knows that the State was no more to blame than I was; but Mr. Newcomb, being something of a local politician, went to Mr. Puppet and asked him if he couldn't get a bill passed to repair the loss. The statesman swelled up like a toad and said, with an air of assumed importance: "I cannot answer positively, but the subject is fraught with great possibilities." You don't need to be told that the experiment was tried, and that the State paid $1,000 for the team. It was said at the time that the extra $750 was to soothe Mr. Newcomb's wounded feelings, but others have hinted that Mr. Puppet got it for his valuable services. But that matter is a mere bagatelle compared with what is done every day when the legislature is in session, and, at Washington, I am told that things are even worse yet, but we have enough to engage our attention nearer home. I will say, however, before quitting the subject of legislative corruption, that I have heard professed Christians say that they couldn't blame a legislator for selling his vote, if he did it in a case that would not injure his constituents. That is to say, it is wrong for anybody to steal from this county, but it is not wrong for our members of assembly to steal from our neighboring counties. Of course, if this doctrine were established as a sound principle, it would give license to all other counties to fall to and plunder

us. But the doctrine is not sound, and the man who preaches it is either a villain or a fool.

One of the most intolerable and unnecessary burdens borne by the taxpayers is beyond the power of our local authorities to remedy. I mean the publication of the laws passed by each session of the legislature. Under the present law every county is compelled to pay for publishing the "session laws," as they are called, in two newspapers printed in the county. This is done at an immense cost to the people, though the expense to the persons receiving the money is merely trifling. I have known $5,000 to be paid in this county for publishing the laws of a single session—being published in four papers instead of two. If the expense is the same in every county (as I suppose it is, substantially), then it cost the people of the State three hundred thousand dollars that year to give a merely transitory notice of what the lawmakers had done. I consider this money entirely wasted; for very few people ever read these publications, and they are forgotten in a week by those who do read them. You must remember that at about the same time that the laws are published in the newspapers the State also publishes them in bound volumes, and deposits a copy in every town clerk's office, county clerk's office, surrogate's office, and district attorney's office in the State. I contend that these volumes are sufficient for all practical purposes. But if more are wanted, deposit one with every justice of the peace, or, better still, put one in every district school-library. The additional expense of these extra copies would be very slight compared

with what we now pay, and we would then have something substantial to show for our money, whereas we now have absolutely nothing. But one of the worst features of the present system is, that the newspapers do not *print* the laws at all, but buy them at wholesale—at less than one-tenth of what they cost us—and inclose them as extras or supplements. They are not inclosed in every issue of the paper either, as I have found out by trying to get a complete edition of the laws by keeping my supplements. Once the first supplement I received was No. 2, and No. 1 never came; and every time I have tried the experiment something has been out of joint. If it is deemed best to make a broadcast publication of the laws, then let the State print these sheets, and send a bundle of them to every town clerk's office for distribution among the people. The present system is an outrage upon the taxpayers, against which they ought to rebel; but they have no mouth-piece, as no newspaper can be induced to speak a word on the subject. I have, years ago, written articles on this subject and tried to get them published in our county newspapers, but the editors have treated me very much as the grand jury did when I complained against the fraudulent doctor's bill. Printers constitute a guild or fraternity that does not believe in kicking against its own interests in financial matters. Let them be fighting ever so hotly among themselves about other matters, the moment it is suggested to close any hole through which any of them are drawing money from the treasury, the fighting ceases, and instantly they become like lovers—

"Two souls with but a single thought;
Two hearts that beat as one."

There is another very serious evil from which the whole world has been suffering for ages, and which needs the application of a radical remedy at the earliest possible moment. I refer to the matter of *usury*, or, as it is called latterly, *interest* for the use of money. This evil was early recognized by thinking men, and for ages the charging or receiving any rate of interest whatever was called *usury*, and was prohibited by law. But by degrees the governments came more or less under the control of covetous and avaricious men, who legalized certain rates of interest and prohibited higher rates. In a new country, where every thing is developing and values rapidly increasing, all business transactions partake so much of the nature of gambling that sometimes a borrower can pay a high rate of interest and still be benefited by the operation. Not so, however, after the country becomes thoroughly settled. I maintain that there is no legitimate business that can be successfully carried on to-day, in the State of New York, on borrowed capital at six per cent. interest. The man who undertakes it will be a slave while his head remains above water, and nothing short of an accidental concurrence of fortunate circumstances will save him from going under in the end. I have seen the statement (though I have no means at hand of verifying it) that ninety-five per cent. of all business men sooner or later make financial failure. There can be no doubt that one of the direct causes of this is *usury*. As I employ the word, it doesn't necessarily mean an unlawful rate of interest, but any rate. It

has been the subject of great wonderment and much study, among statesmen and philosophers, that what we call "financial crises" settle down upon us at intervals of nearly as great regularity as the periods of the comets. There is a cause for this just as surely as there is a cause for the tides of the ocean. I have long believed that *usury* was the principal cause of these financial tides, and there are as many reasons to support this theory as there are in support of the tidal hypothesis. I shall not undertake to argue the matter now, further than to assert that if we take the average rate of interest paid for the use of all the capital employed in the affected district, and calculate from that the time when the compound interest at the average rate will equal the principal (or one hundred per cent.), we shall approximate very closely to the periods of the financial waves. To be sure, the average rate can never be got at exactly, and, if it could be, there will always be other influences (like profits and losses and so forth) to hasten or retard the actual periods and make them vary from the computation, just as the sun is said to interfere with the moon's influence on the oceanic tides. When the financial period is complete—that is, when the borrower has paid, in interest, the full amount that he borrowed, and still owes the principal, then follows a period of liquidation, as we sometimes term it, wherein the usurer gathers in his harvest, and the payer of usury goes into bankruptcy. Every one of these crises leaves the rich richer and the poor poorer, and helps to concentrate the property of the country in the hands of the few. The government ought to correct this

great evil by making money as free as air. I don't mean that a man shall be entitled to money without earning it, but that he shall be at liberty to borrow (from the government if need be) what money his necessity requires, by securing its repayment at the stipulated time with only a fair compensation to the lender (if a private individual) for his trouble in the transaction. The government has undertaken to supply the people with a medium of exchange—a currency without which it is impossible to do business—and it ought to be as impossible for the Shylocks to fence in and dole out at usury any portion of that currency, as it is to do so with God's currency that we breathe.

There are not a few absurdities in the practice of the law that need to be abolished, but as they generally benefit the lawyers, I suppose it will be hard work to get rid of them. Mr. Gibson was recently telling me of one that occurred in his practice. A man had died, leaving a will, which was so uncertain in some of its provisions that a suit in equity was deemed necessary in order to obtain a judicial construction of it—that is, the heirs asked the court to tell them what was the meaning of the will. One of the persons most interested in having this done was a baby only three months old, living with its parents in another State. Now, here is where the absurdity comes in: The only way, under our law, that the court could get jurisdiction to determine that baby's rights under the will was to publish the summons six weeks in two newspapers in this State, and to send a copy of the summons and complaint to the baby by mail. The child's parents would have been

glad to have saved the time and expense of this preposterous proceeding, but nothing they could do, except to bring the babe into this State, could help the matter. If the child had been in this State, a simple delivery of the summons to it and to one of its parents would have done the business, although the little creature would have known no more about one proceeding than the other. There is a still further absurdity in the fact that if the child had been fourteen years old, delivery to it outside the State and sending by mail would have sufficed, without printing in two newspapers. What good the publication can do to a sucking baby is what no mortal can explain. It is the duty of the legislature to do away with such nonsense. Why doesn't it do its duty?

Another expensive bit of nonsense gave me some annoyance a few weeks ago. I held a second mortgage on a piece of real estate. The first mortgage was foreclosed, and the property being sold, afforded a surplus nearly large enough to satisfy my mortgage after paying the prior claim in full, with all costs. Everybody conceded that the whole of this surplus belonged to me. But how was I to get it? It had been paid to the county treasurer by a rule of practice as inflexible as the laws of the Medes and Persians. I had to employ a lawyer, and he got up affidavits and made application to the court, on notice to all persons having liens on the property, and the court appointed a referee to take proof and make report; and after the referee had reported, my attorney made another application to the court, on another notice; and at last, after paying lawyer's

fees, referee's fees, clerk's fees, and county treasurer's fees, I got what was left. As this kind of practice makes business for the lawyers, I suppose nothing short of a revolution will change it for the better. How easy it would have been for the court, in the foreclosure suit, to have disposed of every question, and to have directed the surplus, if any, to be paid to me in the first instance, instead of to the treasurer! All persons interested in a foreclosure suit have to be made defendants, and it should be the duty of the court to settle all their rights in one proceeding, and to order the moneys to be paid by the officer making the sale to the persons entitled, in their order of priority, so far as the moneys will go.

Another matter I may as well mention while on this subject, and that is the judicial administration of the United States law. For instance, a few years ago I bought an improved rubber bucket for my chain pump, the expense being but a trifle; but within a year afterward a stranger came along and said he had a patent on the improvement, and demanded ten dollars from me as a "royalty," which I refused to pay. The next thing I heard, the United States marshal served me with papers in a suit in the United States Circuit Court. I put in a defense, and had to take witnesses two hundred miles to attend court. After a good deal of fooling the plaintiff withdrew his suit; but it cost me about two hundred dollars, nevertheless. Some of my neighbors paid the ten dollars rather than resist a claim which all believed to be invalid or exorbitant. Thousands of men are fattening on this kind of

legalized plunder. I maintain that the United States laws should be administered by the State courts; or, at all events, that a defendant should not be required to go beyond the bounds of the county of his residence to defend himself either in a civil or criminal action.

The greatest objection to a national bankrupt law is the great expense and annoyance to all parties attending its administration. Let it be administered by the State courts, and this objection will be obviated. Our constitutions may have to be amended to effect these reforms, but that is no argument against the necessity of the change; for constitutions are quite easily amended when the people seriously demand it.

Not long ago I was mentioning some instances wherein the people were robbed without legal remedy; but I omitted to mention the matter of private corporations. When a private corporation is fairly managed in the interest of the stockholders it is frequently a useful means of doing good; but if it fall into the hands of rascals, it may become a public enemy, and the stockholders are sure to suffer. In the beginning of the period of railroad building I knew two young men, living in a rural town, who were struggling with poverty. One was a doctor and the other was a lawyer. At length it was proposed to run a line of railroad through their village, and these two young men, having nothing else to do, procured employment from the railroad officials to solicit subscriptions to the stock of the company, and to obtain concessions or purchases of the right of way in the neighborhood of their home. This

was their beginning, and it soon became evident that their new occupation was more remunerative than law or medicine had been. They climbed up from position to position until they became directors of the railroad company, and they both died millionaires. Not only so, but every man who ever had a hand in the management of that company became a millionaire, while the men whose money built and equipped the road lost every dollar of their investment. I don't charge that these men enriched themselves by violating any law of the State; but if they did not, so much the worse for the law. They certainly violated the rule of the try-square, and the law of the land ought not to have permitted it.

This is only one out of hundreds of similar instances that might be mentioned. Many of these private corporations are completely honeycombed with the dens of thieves of high and low degree, and honest men are furnishing the material on which they fatten.

Frequently, when a corporation is organized, the gang who manage it lay their plans deliberately from the beginning to rope in as many silly people who have money as they can, and then, having sucked them dry, to freeze them out by foreclosure or some other equally effective process. This has been done so many times that the story is an old one. Sometimes towns have been bonded in large amounts in aid of a proposed railroad, and the rascals have sold the bonds, divided the money, and refused to build the road. You know towns in this vicinity that will be taxed on just such bonds for twenty years yet to come; but nobody ever gets

punished for such skulduggery, excepting the honest and innocent victims thereof.

But I need not enumerate further. Go where you will, and draw aside the beautiful screen (made of money stolen from the pockets of honest people), and you will invariably find something wrong, something crooked, something corrupt—yea, you will not need to go to the State of Denmark to find something altogether rotten. I dislike to dwell on the disgusting subject. It makes me gnash my teeth; and pious oaths bubble up from my heart to my tongue. Will it ever be better? Oh, yes, it will some time be better, just as sure as fate. God's logic will straighten things out in the fullness of time. There is no doubt of that; but I fear, if we wait for God to do it, that it will be done with a strong hand and multitude of people—that is, by riot, by bloodshed, by anarchy, by chaos. Some time ago, as I was passing a little brook on my premises, I discovered a large number of minute ants struggling with the water and with one another in a little eddy of the stream. The water where they were was whirling round and round in a circle, and the little insects were powerless to swim beyond the influence of the whirlpool. I soon observed a bit of cork, less than half an inch in diameter, floating and gyrating among the ants, and on closer inspection I saw a good many of the little fellows on top of the cork, and hundreds were fighting to get there. I sat down and watched them, and before long the portion of the cork that was above water was covered, and at length crowded with the insects; but still the fighting and clambering went on until the ants had piled themselves up

like cordwood—when lo, a *revolution!* . The cork turned top side down, scattering its load in all directions, and a new lot of ants was given a chance to repeat the performance; and the performance was repeated over and over, until from sheer pity I helped the little sufferers to land. My friends, this manner of revolution is God's way of restoring a disturbed equilibrium. Look at that most potent influence in nature—the electric fluid! When its equilibrium is lost, it is restored again by a fiery bolt, which leaps forth without warning, carrying in its path ruin, destruction, devastation, death. Now, my brethren, if the wrong practices, the corruptions, the sins that I have mentioned, and hundreds of others not hinted at, are not in some manner checked, it don't need a prophet to foretell that the time will come when God will restore the lost equilibrium of right and justice and law, in the twinkling of an eye, by a revolution so dreadful, so widespread, so far-reaching in its consequences, as to overshadow anything ever known in France. As matters are now going on, we are piling up wrath against a day of wrath just as sure as death. Things are getting top-heavy already, and pretty soon they will begin to totter. I am only giving you God's logic.

But while I prophesy these things, I am, nevertheless, one of those who believe that, if timely warning be heeded, the dire calamity may be averted, just as we are learning to neutralize the destructive bolts of heaven. But the remedy must be applied at once—instantly—and it must be radical and sweeping. The first thing to do is for every lover of righteousness in the land—male and female—to

cease to serve self, and to convert himself into an earnest, determined, fighting soldier in the army of God. The corrupt tide must be met and turned back, and the imps of darkness must be hunted from their holes and punished. Every public office, and every place of trust, public or private, must be administered by a brave, determined, vigilant, God-fearing man or woman. Where the law is wrong it must be made right; and the cobwebs of antiquity that have outlived their usefulness, like the jury system, both grand and petit, and all diseases of the body politic, must be swept away. The administration of justice must be made sure, cheap, and summary; and for that purpose the judges must not be blockheads, but learned, skilful, and honest, and all the devices by which rogues baffle justice must be stamped out. I believe that the cause of right and justice would be the gainer if all statutes and legal rules were abrogated, and the judges left free to decide each particular case according to the natural sense of right and justice inherent in the minds of men.

Some of you may think it preposterous for the people in this little neighborhood to undertake so radical a reformation of the world. Perhaps we shall have but little influence, but it is nevertheless my duty to let my light shine to the best of my ability, and if those who hear my words and are convinced of their truth will do their duty as faithfully as I have tried to do mine we shall at least have the sweet reward that comes from satisfied consciences; and when the catastrophe comes (if come it must) the guilty ones cannot say we caused it, "nor shake their gory locks at us."

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION—THE LAND QUESTION—NEW SOCIAL CONDITIONS FORESHADOWED.

REP. Uncle Job's reflections on "Law Reform" led him from point to point until he had gone far beyond the legitimate subject, though in the same general direction; and the cream of his remarks in that strain must form the concluding chapter of this volume.

Before opening that matter, however, I must take room to wedge in one little incident. Uncle Job found on his desk, one Sunday afternoon, this question: "When religion and science are in conflict, which do you think ought to give way?" after reading it aloud—

SAWYER. The answer is self-evident. Of course, that one should give way that is ascertained to be wrong. There is not, never was, and never can be, any conflict between genuine religion and true science. All the wrangling over supposed or alleged conflicts between these twin daughters of God has been caused by bigoted idiots, arrayed on one side or the other.

You have often heard me remark that the times are out of joint, and that nearly every thing connected with human government is vicious. I have

given a great deal of thought to these subjects, and have formed some conclusions which seem logical to me, but which may seem so absurd to others as to lead them to exclaim, as Festus did to Paul, "that much study has made me mad." To such, if such there be, I answer, as Paul did: "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."

Let us look at some of these matters logically. Look about you and see the condition of society to-day. By society I don't mean that self-conceited little circle of silly people with kid gloves and so forth, who think they constitute all there is of society, but I mean the whole human family. To begin at one end, we have a vast body of paupers—persons supported by the government. Next to them we have a much larger body of persons who really possess no more property than the paupers, but who manage, "by hook and by crook," to barely exist, though they suffer every thing that human beings are capable of—far more than the paupers do. Then comes another very large class who own a little property—a very little—but who live in a sort of hand-to-mouth fashion during their whole lives on the fruits of such labor as they can find to do. Following these we have another large class of moderately well-to-do people, but who stand in mortal fear that every revolution of the earth on its axis will rob them of their possessions, and who usually live as meanly as any of the preceding classes. The next class comprises the moderately wealthy, and last of all comes the enormously wealthy.

Now, it is said that this is a free country, and that

all its people are equal before the law. These sayings are false. This is not a free country, and all the people are not equal before the law. When the country was new and everybody who came here was poor, and land could be had by simply taking possession of it, and there was enough for all and to spare, those boastful sayings were not far from the truth, but any fool can see that there is no truth in them now. The fact is that those who have no property are the servants—the mere slaves—of those who have property. Tell me how the child born of poor parents to-day, though he be endowed with the genius of Columbus, is to acquire an equal footing with the children of the wealthy! Where can he find a place or opportunity to do anything on his own account? At best he must be a hired servant from the cradle to the grave, and if nobody will employ him he must become a beggar or a pauper. It is useless to point me to instances here and there of poor men who became wealthy in times past. I am talking of the present and the future. Those who are here now have seized (and they hold by the firm grip which the law gives them) every available foothold, and those who are ushered into existence hereafter can truly say with Christ: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of [a poor] man hath not where to lay his head." This is not right, it is unjust; it does not tally with the try-square.

Now, I fancy that by this time somebody is saying to himself: "Oh, you are a communist, you're a nihilist; you want to rob one man to give to another!" Well, my friends, I don't know much

about communism or nihilism, except that they are decried as something utterly awful, but I am not going to be frightened by hard words. If following God's logic leads me into the camp of the communists, then there shall be my abiding-place, and I will accept and wear the name cheerfully.

It was said of old, and truly said, that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." That is to say, being correctly interpreted, that the land, the water, the atmosphere, the mines of useful metals, minerals, oils and gases, the forests, and everything that grows or lives upon the land or in the water, belongs to mankind collectively, and that individuals have only the right to a temporary use thereof. Tell me on what principle of right or justice one man is permitted to absolutely own a whole vast coal mine while thousands of his fellow-men are suffering for coal, which they have no power to obtain. It is not a sufficient answer to say that he is entitled to it because he discovered it, or bought it of the discoverer. If it was not his before discovery, how does the discovery make it his? If a man finds my lost property, he is entitled to a reasonable reward, but he gets no title to my property. Why don't the same rule hold good when he finds something which belongs to all the people—to the government? It is entirely proper that he should have a suitable reward. In case of a big find I would grant him enough to satisfy his every reasonable desire during his life, and would erect a monument to his memory when he is dead; but to give him the power to tyrannize over his brethren is criminally wrong. What right had the men of the past to divide the

whole earth among themselves, and to surround their possessions with impregnable walls, so that the new-comers of to-day cannot touch their feet to the planet without becoming trespassers? I answer that they had no more right to do that than I have to appropriate to my own exclusive use all the atmosphere that surrounds the globe.

A great many remedies have been suggested, intended to mitigate or neutralize the evils (or some of them) that I have tried to point out, and many others that I need not take time to enumerate. One says we must pass a law making it impossible for a person to receive more than a certain fixed amount (say $1,000,000) by gift or by inheritance. No doubt such a law would do good if it could be enforced, but from our experience we have no right to believe that such a law would not be evaded and violated, so as to be practically a dead letter. But such a law would do no good in the rural districts unless the amount was very much reduced, because in those districts very few men ever obtain a million dollars, and yet we have rural nabobs quite as overbearing and dangerous to society, in the neighborhoods where they reside, as their wealthier brethren of the cities. Another wants to forcibly rob the rich and give to the poor, so as to start the whole world on an even footing; but this, while being a heroic remedy, would afford only temporary relief, unless the whole existing system of doing business should be radically changed. Who does not know that if such a redistribution should be made the sharpers, the rogues, the thieves, and the Shylocks would skin alive the weak-minded, the

timid, the improvident, and the unfortunate of all grades and conditions, so that in twenty-five years things would be but little better than they are now? Redistributions of property have been made hundreds of times in the old world; every violent revolution has made thousands of rich men poor and poor men rich, but still the evil of unequal wealth exists there even in greater degree than here. The fact is that all business, commerce, trade, traffic, or whatever name you please to call it by, partakes largely of the nature of mere gambling. The man who actually produces something useful, or performs some needful service, for a fair compensation is not a gambler, and if all men were confined to such acts enormous wealth would be impossible for any man. But every method of money-getting, by what we call business, that simply takes money from one man and gives it to another without a full equivalent, is either *gambling* or *cheating*. All transactions commonly called *speculations* must come under one or the other of these heads—gambling or cheating. They add nothing to the world's wealth, and they cause countless millions to suffer. It seems to be a fact that the actual producers of wealth are the least likely of all others to become wealthy. The speculators—*i.e.*, the gamblers in wealth created by others—amass colossal fortunes, and then attempt to crush the very men who made their good luck possible. Apply your try-square where you will, and you will find these speculative transactions are always wrong in tendency and in final results. Most persons will admit this in the abstract, but they will also say that it can't be remedied; that *somebody*

will speculate, and *they* may as well do it as to allow others to. But if it is wrong to do any particular thing, a good man cannot do that thing and remain a good man; and if good men (or men claiming to be good) will not refrain from doing wrong, how shall bad men be restrained?

It is thought by some theorists that what is called legitimate business may be regulated by competition, so as to be harmless to the community. This is a great mistake. I admit that the people derive temporary benefits from the rivalries of the competitors, but in the end, if the competition be earnest or bitter, the weak ones are driven to the wall and the survivors immediately become monopolists. Sometimes, if the rivals have nearly equal strength, one will buy the others out, or all will combine their strength, and thus in either case a monopoly will be formed and the benefits of competition come to an end. The people get their greatest benefit out of competition at the very time when the competitors are struggling to establish a monoply. Competition will, if lively, nearly always lead to something akin to monopoly, because there is not a sufficient profit to be realized from business so conducted to satisfy the rapacity of the average business man, and such men will not willingly do business a great while at a loss, unless they can see a chance for larger profits in the future by killing off or buying out their competitors. So it will be seen that the old saying, that "competition is the life of business," is not true. In the long run competition is the *death* of business.

It is not just now in order to discuss those com-

binations called "Rings," by which scoundrels get control of legal machinery, and enrich themselves dishonestly under the forms of law. That subject comes under the head of larceny, and the thieves should be dealt with by the heavy hand of the criminal law; and the law should be carefully framed so as to prevent them from escaping condign punishment for their crimes. Lynch law by mass meeting ought to be legalized for such cases when other remedies fail.

The evils we now see growing out of the unequal distribution of property in the world (and I cannot enumerate those evils if I should try) would have been very much worse than they now are if it had not been for the discovery of America and Australia; for those new worlds gave an outlet to the overcrowded old world—made a sort of safety-valve—and, in the rough-and-tumble incident to the settlement of the new countries, millions of turbulent spirits that would have made trouble at home, if confined there, found opportunities for satisfactory self-advancement, and thus the old world was saved temporarily from the deadly perils of what I believe to be a radically wrong social and financial system. We have inherited that wrong system, and now that we are becoming nearly as wealthy and nearly as closely packed together as our cousins beyond the sea, the same perils that have threatened and still threaten them are beginning to loom up in our front, and thus the grandest problems are presented for our consideration and solution that mankind was ever called upon to solve. And *we must solve* them, too (or else God will solve them for us in his own

time and high-handed way), for new worlds to act as safety-valves do not grow on every bush.

I have turned these matters over and over in my mind, and examined them from every conceivable point of view, applying what I believed to be God's logic, and also the try-square, to every point and corner, and all my observation and study leads to the inevitable conclusion that all the evils society is now suffering from must increase, instead of diminishing, unless our whole social and financial system is radically changed. Our social structure is so dependent upon and interwoven with our financial system that I do not undertake to separate them, but treat the two as one system of government. For at least five thousand years we have proof that legislation has failed to make men honest, or to mitigate man's greed for selfish gain, or to lessen "man's inhumanity to man." Of course, I do not forget the millions given to charities, but nine-tenths of that is given, not as something *due*, but as a gratuity or sacrifice. With a few exceptions, all mankind, save the extremely poor, seem to be given over, body and mind, to a selfish struggle to acquire property—each ambitious to win more than his neighbor—and in this struggle the rogues and sharpers seem to have the advantage. Does any one believe that a continuance in this course will ever bring us to what our Christian friends call the "millennium?" No; we are going directly away from the "millennium." Christ said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," and although that doctrine has been preached as God's truth (and it *is* God's truth) for nearly two thousand years, yet during all that time mankind

have been trying to do that very thing. They have failed thus far, and nothing but failure awaits their efforts in the future.

The Apostle Paul said, "The love of money is the root of all evil," and Paul hit pretty close to the truth when he said that. What evil can you think of that has not the love of money at the bottom of it—directly or indirectly? I think just now of only one—or rather, one class of evils—namely, those evils growing out of the sexual relation other than prostitution. So far as prostitution is concerned, it could not live without money; but the evils I specially had in mind were those growing out of the rivalries and intrigues among lovers, which lead to quarrels and sometimes to murders. There may be other evils that money is not responsible for, but they do not occur to me at this moment. But the strongest criticism that can be made against Paul's saying is that it does not go to the bottom of the matter. He would have hit nearer the truth if he had said that *money* was the root of all evil; because, while money exists, the *love* of it must also exist, unless man's nature shall be entirely changed. I would go still further, and say that the artificial rule, established and acknowledged by society, which permits the absolute and exclusive ownership of property by individuals, is the root of nearly all the evils which now curse the civilized world. Does this doctrine seem monstrous? If so, it is because we and our ancestors for thousands of years have been mistakenly educated to the contrary. Why, just reflect on this proposition for a moment. The very idea of property, as we understand it, is con-

trary to natural law. Man is the only one of God's creatures that attempts to accumulate property beyond actual or supposed need. The sea is full of fish, but the most powerful can only appropriate sufficient for his present wants; and so it is with the whole animal kingdom, except man alone. I do not believe that acquisitiveness was any more highly developed in the primitive man than we see it now among the lower animals; but that faculty has grown abnormally in man by artificial cultivation, very much as some men artifically acquire an appetite for tobacco or whisky; and this comparison suggests a thought which seems to prove the artificiality of the acquisitive faculty. All our natural faculties, including what are called passions (as love, hate, etc.), seem to relax and weaken as we approach old age; while, on the other hand, all our artificially acquired habits that have become second nature by long use grow stronger as age creeps on, unless constantly restrained. This is especially so with the use of narcotics and intoxicants; and the rule holds good in the case of the acquisitive habit. Oh, how many noble souls have been transformed into grasping, miserable old misers by the long practice of selfish acquisition!

Now, my cure-all is simply to *demonetize money and depropertize property.** Yes, my friends, I propose, in the language of the poet, to

> "wipe the slate
> Clean for the ciph'rin' of some nobler fate."

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* The phrase, "Demonetize money and depropertize property," was a great pet with Uncle Job about this time, and he was fond of repeating it with considerable stress of voice.—Rep.

But I imagine everybody is saying all at once, "How shall this be done?" In this country the process is an easy one, provided a majority of our people desire to do it. Our State and national constitutions can be readily amended by the voice of the people within a comparatively brief period, so that no man in the United States will individually own a cent's worth of anything. This ought to be done without violence, without the destruction of any valuable thing, and without that horror of horrors called Anarchy. If we should resolve on this course at once, and fix the date now January 1, 1900, for the new order of things to begin, everybody would make all of his calculations accordingly, so that the change would produce no great shock—just as fixing the date for specie resumption by Congress brought resumption easily and quietly before the day fixed.

But, says one, How will everything be managed under the new system? I propose to trust to the brains and virtues of my fellow-men to solve that problem when necessity requires, rather than to make haste to borrow trouble about it. If Robinson Crusoe could surmount the difficulties that confronted him on his island, I am sure there need be no trouble in this land of plenty. As a *suggestion*, however, suppose we should go to bed to-night under the present system and awake in the morning to find the new order of things in force in this county, what would we do? Why, we would take it as coolly as cucumbers. The town officers would assume the management of affairs in their respective towns, and the board of supervisors would exercise such authority over the town boards as might be necessary for

the general welfare. The people would elect their officers just as they do now (except that vote-buying would cease), but their powers would be changed and increased by necessity (which makes and unmakes law), so as to resemble military officers in some respects. Work will have to be done then as well as now, but no one will be required to do what he cannot do, and each will be selected to do that which he is best qualified to do. There will be no need of whisky and beer, and so the men now engaged in the manufacture and sale of that damned stuff will be put to some useful employment, and thus make work lighter for others; and the same thing will be true concerning lawyers, speculators, gamblers, bankers, brokers, usurers, real estate agents, insurance agents, commercial drummers, etc. We can also spare most of the judges, and with them we shall rid ourselves of mountains of perjury and other deviltry. Preachers of the right sort and teachers and good doctors will still be needed in their old occupations; and we shall also have use for printers, and writers of poetry and fiction as well as other prose works, also theaters and actors and artists generally; but everybody will work for everybody, and only get for compensation his living and such comforts, pleasures, and luxuries as the general prosperity will warrant, and the cultivation of selfishness will cease. There will be no objection then to labor-saving machinery—the more of that the better—nor will there be any more hue and cry about "over-production" or "under-consumption;" and instead of opposing convict labor in such prisons as we shall then need, we shall all

be glad to have them work fifteen hours a day at the most productive labor. Supplies will be dealt out somewhat as an army is furnished. In fact, I am quite disposed to believe that something similar to an army organization would be the most convenient and efficient means of government in many respects. In the early days of our common law the people were divided into "Hundreds" (which is the average size of a military company), and they were governed by the best kind of horse-sense to be had in that day. The family relation—the home—must not be interfered with (though I think the divorce laws should be so amended that two uncongenial souls shall not be compelled to live together in hatred forever); but for greater facilities of improvement, pleasures, etc., the residents of rural neighborhoods should be gathered into villages from two to five miles apart, and, where practicable, the field laborers should be conveyed to and from their work on railroads. The general government will assume control of all the railroads and other lines of transportation—also telegraph and telephone lines—and I think all necessary hotels for the accommodation of the traveling public should be maintained and managed by the government at large; and that every citizen having a proper leave of absence should be permitted to travel by public conveyance, and be supplied by the public-houses, free.

Under the new *regime* we shall not be obliged to eat bogus butter or other adulterated food, nor to wear shoddy clothing. There will be no trouble then about preserving and controlling the forests, nor the great wealth now stored in the bowels of the

earth. There will be no thieves then, because no man can own anything, and *money*, as we now understand the word, will be unknown; but, besides that, there will be no inducement to steal, for every person will be just as well off as every other person; and, further, there will be little opportunity to steal or to hide stolen goods, for every person will have to be carefully looked after and accounted for every day by the officers. In fact, as I said at the outset, all the evils that now vex mankind will be eradicated by extracting the root of all the trouble. Heretofore, for thousands of years, all work against sin has been expended in hacking at its branches and twigs; but I now propose to lay the ax earnestly and vigorously at its root to the best of my ability, and I have no more doubt that in the fullness of time a change will be effected substantially like what I have indicated than I have that water will continue to flow down hill. I tell you, my friends, we are on the wrong track, and we have *got* to change. We now have the option of acting promptly and voluntarily, and thus ushering in the new order of things gently and peaceably; or we can procrastinate until a change is forced upon us, after a season of slaughter, destruction, and anarchy. I am ready to surrender my possessions immediately, if all will do so. Indeed, I believe there are millions of property-owners who, if they understood the proposition, would not only be willing, but *glad* to accept it, because (for one reason) they have found the care of property attended with great uncertainty and vexation. I fancy somebody is saying that, even if we are going wrong, we have been going

that way so long, and everything has become so fixed and settled, that it will be too bad to rip things all up and start over again. That is to say, in other words, the longer one has been steeped in sin the greater objection to his reformation! That doctrine will hardly bear inspection. If an evil is of long standing, the more urgent is the need for speedy reformation.

But in making this change extreme care must be taken to cause as little friction as possible, for no one now living is especially to blame, but the system itself is at fault. To save friction I would guarantee to every owner of property certain privileges in proportion to the size of his estate, but which privileges should not be transmitted, nor transmittible, to his descendants. I don't know as I would make any difference in the privileges granted to a man worth a million and one worth a hundred millions. I would give to both the full and free gratification during life of every proper desire, but they should be bereft of every power to oppress their fellowmen.

A wise political economy will dictate that, so far as reasonably can be, production and consumption shall go hand in hand—that is, that the distance from the place of production of any article to the place where it is to be consumed shall be as short as possible. But, of course, there will be some articles that will have to be transported long distances. For instance, we here shall need oranges from Florida, and sugar and cotton from other southern points, and they in turn will need products that we can raise or manufacture more easily than they can.

The town will probably be taken as the unit of common wealth, until a more suitable one has been discovered by experience. The general government should establish and maintain a just scale or schedule of values—equivalents—for all products, and, in addition to doing all the transportation between the various commonwealths of the common country, should also keep the accounts and adjust the balances between them. Doubtless, paper certificates would be convenient for the temporary adjustment of balances, but in the end they should be redeemed with something of actual value.

What shall we do with all our gold and silver when we no longer need it for money? Some of it we shall need for table ware and other uses, where we now use baser metals; and some can be used for ornaments by those who now have none, and what we do not need for purposes of utility or art we can sell to the countries that are foolish enough to retain the old system; or, if we think best, we can cast it into blocks of half a ton each, and cord them up in the highways until wanted for some proper purpose.

Under the new system we shall have so many more people than we now have to do the necessary work, that we can reduce the number of hours in a day's work to from four to six (possibly less), and we can also have at least two holidays in every week besides Sunday. Human beings will, of course, be just as ambitious for distinction then as now; and some will, therefore, spend their spare time in experimenting, or trying to invent something new and useful, or in writing, painting, or other congenial work; and

the government will encourage such efforts by offering suitable rewards. Those who favorably distinguish themselves will, doubtless, be exempted from certain kinds of service, or from full-time service, or from all service, according to their deserts. Perhaps some will be given certain privileges of travel at home or abroad, or both; and possibly all faithful ones will have a general respite, after reaching a certain age, during the remainder of their lives.

If some one objects that we shall be restrained of our proper liberties, I ask him, in thunder tones, where are our boasted liberties now, when ninety-nine out of every hundred of us are bound to our daily tasks like galley-slaves with chains?

Under the new *regime* all the people, male and female, will be absolutely equal, and just as free as will be consistent with the best good of all. The reign of selfishness will have passed away, and the reign of benevolence will have begun. A man can then truly "love his neighbor as himself," which has been impossible heretofore. We shall all be philanthrophists "in the good time coming," and we shall all be measured then by our merits instead of by our dollars. There will then be some truth in the saying that the world owes every man a living, but it will be true as to any particular person only when that person gives himself wholly to the world.

As bribery and political corruption will be at an end, the government will be more truly democratic than ever before. Many of the officers we now have will be needed no more, and will be legislated away. The majority will rule in all things. If the majority

decide to build pyramids, then we shall build pyramids; but there will be no slavery nor tyranny, and if we *do* build pyramids, the jobs will not be let to the devil by contract, and no scoundrel will get rich out of it by "unbalanced bids," nor by "grinding the face of the poor."

What shall we do in case of war? Let us borrow no trouble about war. We shall be just as well prepared for war then as we are now, and we don't seem to lie awake much nights at present thinking on that subject. But I hope we shall never have any more wars. I hope that the other nations of the earth will be so pleased with our changed condition that they will be induced to follow our example, and that in due process of time we shall have what Tennyson calls "the federation of the world."

I suggested January 1, 1900, as a date for the beginning of the new condition; but in reality it ought to be brought about in one-half or one-third of that time. Only think of the incalculable amount of human suffering that is bottled up, as it were, in fifteen years of the old system! But compassion for the poor is not our only need for haste to make the change. Let us see. I have a worthy neighbor who has a wife and six little children, and it would be incredible to strangers if told how fearfully near this family lives to the style of the primitive man. The man is a first-rate mechanic, and used to get good wages at regular intervals, but finally, when work at his trade became scarce, he became a common laborer, and for three or four years he has been working for a dollar a day the year round, and on that sum, in some inscrutable way, the family have

managed to keep soul and body together; though, of course, they have lacked many of the things that most civilized people deem necessary to existence. Early this winter this man's employer, for economy's sake, discharged a part of his force, including my neighbor, and the poor man can find but little to do since. Though not highly educated, the man is naturally as intelligent and proud spirited as I am, and it makes me shudder sometimes to hear him express his opinion concerning the present constitution of society. Of course there is always the poor-house as a last resort for poor people, but, I think, my friend would rather cut his throat than to go there. My wife is doing for the family all they will let her do, which is much less than we would wish. I see no bright future for this family under the old system; and then only to think that there are actually *millions* of people in our country to-day who are no better off than the family of my poor friend!

Suppose all of us, who now own all the property in the whole United States (or in this State alone, if you please), should suddenly come to the conclusion that owing to the hard times we would quit business, and discharge most of our help. I think, in that case, we would instantly find ourselves right in the midst of chaos. This is no fanciful supposition; for in some places, even now, the capitalists are compelled to do business and employ men solely to prevent disturbance, and possible destruction and violence. When this can no longer be done without serious loss it must and will cease, and then the deserving poor, like my poor friend, will be so multiplied as soon to constitute a majority of our people,

and we—property owners—will be absolutely at their mercy. I don't like to contemplate the possibilities of such a condition of things, and will not enlarge the picture. I say again that five years is time enough in which to make the change. African slavery was substantially wiped out in less than three years, at the very time when it seemed strongest. I tell you, my friends, it don't take very long for a revolution to revolve.

Wisdom and prudence on our part demand that we should foresee the "danger ahead," and endeavor to so manage affairs, while we retain control of them, that instead of waiting to be trampled under the feet of a mob, driven to desperation by tyranny too long endured, we shall ourselves become the leaders and guides of our less fortunate brethren in their transition from the Egypt, where they now are, through the wilderness incident to the change of condition, avoiding the Red Sea, and conducting them safely to the Promised Land. Then we shall unite—old, young, high, low, male and female—in singing the grand chorus:

> "Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
> Jehovah has triumphed—his people are free."

REP. I must add a few words here in justice to myself as well as to Uncle Job. The last two chapters have been prepared, pruned, and condensed by me while under a distraction of mind bordering on insanity, caused by the sudden and complete loss of what I had flattered myself was an ample competence for my declining years. I have to some extent been borne up by the hope that the sale of this little book

might partly replace my loss; and the calamity and the hope have conspired to make me cut short my work at this point. If the public shall manifest a wish for more of the same sort, I promise them that, if life and health are spared me, they shall have all they want.

It is due to the reader that I should give a brief hint of the latest news. Mr. Nash is doing wonders. He not only advocates the cause of the new party, as he travels over the country, but he also boldly preaches the gospel of Practical Religion, and he is making many converts.

As winter approached, three of the Protestant churches united in holding a series of "revival meetings," and for that purpose employed an itinerant preacher, who styled himself an "evangelist," but whom Uncle Job called (in private) "a regular hell-fire preacher." He did, indeed, preach "hell-fire" in its most literal sense, and he actually exhibited drawings and paintings to illustrate the torments of sinners in the several quarters of the "burning lake." He seemed to have been imported on purpose to counteract Uncle Job's great work; for, in his first effort in Pinville, without knowing any of the facts except from poisoned tongues, he waded into practical religion as though he expected to wipe it out by a sort of ecclesiastical *bull*. He said Uncle Job was "*The Antichrist*," and that we were all "rebels against God," and that we would all have safe quarters in the world to come as "tenants of hell." Uncle Job paid no attention to this vituperation, otherwise than to smile blandly when told of it. He only made one public mention of the revival

meetings during the nearly four weeks of their duration, which was the first Sunday after the meetings commenced, when he said in substance—

SAWYER. I hope everybody will attend the revival meetings at least once, and as much more as they wish to, and always in the spirit of the honest seeker after truth; and if you become convinced that they have something better there than we have here, don't fail to embrace it with all your heart and strength, and then bring the "glad tidings" to us with all convenient speed.

REP. The revival meetings were reported to have been fairly successful (among the children mostly), but they drew no recruits from the Church of Practical Religion. Every Sunday afternoon, in fair weather, even during the "revival," from one thousand to thirteen hundred people (many of them from the rural districts) crowded the rink to hear Uncle Job; and sometimes all could not get inside who wished to.

One other point I must take room for. Good old Mrs. Evener, who sincerely thinks she holds communion with and receives impressions directly from a personal God, and who has faith enough to remove mountains (if such a thing can be accomplished by faith alone), has become sick of being connected with a church that is controlled by Mr. Badsinner and his gang, and she has actually united with us. She says she don't think we have religion *enough*, but that it is good so far as it goes; and she says it is her mission to knock the scales from our eyes so that we may see the dazzling glory of God. She often speaks and prays in our meetings, and she is getting

to be almost as much of a favorite with us as Uncle Job is.

A little incident which occurred some time ago is so characteristic of the old lady that I have (through Uncle Job) obtained her consent to its insertion here. Until now it has been a carefully guarded secret. One Sunday morning, about ten o'clock, Uncle Job went to Mr. Evener's house on an errand concerning a sick horse, and Mr. E., being outside, took him directly into the "wood-house" to get some required implement; and there, to the great astonishment of both men, was Mrs. Evener in her shabbiest working suit, surrounded by dirt and hurly-burly. For a moment there was a tableau; but presently—

SAWYER. Why, Mrs. Evener, here you are in the very act of breaking one of the commandments! I presume the facts will justify it under Practical Religion, but how do you justify it under *your* religion?

MRS. E. I had a wrestle with myself and with God over that question, and decided that it was right before I began. You know Christ said it was right to do good on the Sabbath. Well, this is our "catch-all;" and owing to several unavoidable causes it has become so filled and choked up with old boots, old shoes, saw-bucks, kindling-wood, old stovepipe, old clothing, old fruit cans, old watering-pots, old bottles, and every other old thing under the sun, besides lots and lots of dirt, that it had become a regular *devil's nest*, and I couldn't see any hope of getting time to clean it out for a long way ahead unless I did it some Sunday. So here I am staying

from church, and working like a beaver. Don't you think I would make a pretty good picture of "Christian at Work?"

SAWYER. I have no doubt that your conscience approves your action, and in such a case as this one's own conscience is all that ought to be consulted. Yet I don't think you need to feel so bad about the condition of this room. I guess it is as good as *ours*, and I have come to the conclusion that no family can be strictly called "well-regulated" without having, *somewhere*, just about such a place as this. But, Mrs. Evener, if your conscience was entirely clear, why were you so secret, and why so mortified when you were discovered?

MRS. E. I was not afraid of *you*, Mr. Sawyer, after I saw who it was, but we have *some* neighbors that I am more afraid of than I am of God.

GOOD-BYE.

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